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The First Part of

A N

EQUAL CHECK

T O

K *Pharisaism and Antinomianism,*

CONTAINING

- I. An HISTORICAL ESSAY on the danger of parting
Faith and Works.
- II. *Salvation by the covenant of grace*, A DISCOURSE
preached in the parish church of Madeley, April
18, and May 9, 1773.
- III. A SCRIPTURAL ESSAY on the astonishing re-
wardableness of works, according to the covenant
of grace.
- IV. An ESSAY ON TRUTH, Or, A *rational Vindica-*
tion of the doctrine of salvation by Faith, with a
dedicatory Epistle to the Right Hon. the Countess
of Huntingdon.

The armour of righteousness on the right hand, and on the left,

2 Cor. vi. 7.

By the Author of the CHECKS to ANTINOMIANISM.

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SOON WILL BE PUBLISHED,

Zelotes and Honestus reconciled :

O R,

The Second Part of an Equal Check to Pharisaism
and Antinomianism :

BEING BOTH

SCRIPTURE-SCALES

To weigh the gold of gospel-truth :

AND A

DOCTRINAL CONCORDANCE

To reconcile and balance a multitude of opposite
scriptures, to prove the gospel-marriage of Free-
grace and Free-will, and restore primitive harmony
to the

Gospel of the day.

Si non est Dei gratia, quomodo salvat mundum ? Si non est liberum
— arbitrium, quomodo judicat mundum. *Aug : Ep. 46.*



P R E F A C E.

I. **T**HE first piece of this Check was designed for a preface to the Discourse that follows it ; but as it swelled far beyond my intention, I present it to the Reader under the name of *An historical Essay* ; which makes way for the tracts that follow.

II. With respect to the *Discourse*, I must mention what engages me to publish it. In 1771 I saw the propositions called *the Minutes*. Their author invited me to “ *review the whole affair.*” I did so ; and soon found, that I had “ *leaned too much towards Calvinism,*” which, after mature consideration, appeared to me exactly to coincide with *speculative* antinomianism ; and the same year I publicly acknowledged my error in these words :

“ But whence springs this almost general antinomianism of our congregations ? Shall I conceal the
 “ fore because it festers in *my own* breast ? Shall I be
 “ partial ? No : in the name of Him, who is no res-
 “ pecter of persons, I will confess *my* sin, and that
 “ of *many* of my brethren, &c. — Is not the antino-
 “ mianism of hearers fomented by that of preachers ?
 “ Does it not become *us* to take the greatest part of
 “ the blame upon *ourselves*, according to the old
 “ adage, *Like priest like people* ? — Is it surprising that
 “ some of *us* should have an antinomian audience ?
 “ Do *we* not make or keep it so ? When did *we*
 “ preach such a *practical* sermon, as that of our Lord
 “ on the mount ? or write such *close* letters, as the
 “ epistles of St, John ?” Second Check, p. 64, and
 65, to the end of the paragraph.

When I had thus openly confessed, that I was involved in the guilt of *many of my brethren*, and that I had so leaned towards *speculative*, as not to have made a proper stand against *practical* antinomianism ; who could have thought, that one of my most formidable

dable opponents would have attempted to screen his mistakes, behind some passages of a manuscript sermon, which I preached twelve years ago; and of which, by some means or other, he has got a copy?

I am very far however from recanting that old discourse. I still think, the doctrine it contains excellent in the main, and very proper to be enforced [tho' in a more guarded manner] in a congregation of hearers violently prejudiced against the first gospel-axiom. Therefore, out of regard for the grand, leading truth of christianity, and in compliance with Mr. H—ll's *earnest intreaty*, [Fin. Stroke, p. 45.] I send my sermon into the world, upon the following reasonable conditions: (1) That I shall be allowed to publish it, as I preached it a year ago in my church; namely, with *additions in brackets*, to make it at once a *fuller* check to pharisaism, and a *finishing* check to antinomianism: (2) That the largest addition shall be in favour of *free grace*: (3) That no body shall accuse me of *forgery*, for thus adding my present light to that which I had formerly; and for thus bringing out of my little treasure of experience *things new and old*: (4) That the press shall not groan with the charge of *disingenuity*, if I throw into notes some unguarded expressions, which I formerly used without scruple, and which my more enlightened conscience does not suffer me to use at present: (5) That my opponent's call to print my sermon, will procure me the pardon of the public, for presenting them with a plain, *blunt* discourse, composed for an audience chiefly made up of colliers and rustics: And lastly, that as I understand english a little better than I did twelve years ago, I shall be permitted to rectify a few french idioms, which I find in my old manuscript; and to *connect* my thoughts a little more like an Englishman, where I can do it without the least misrepresentation of the sense.

If these conditions appear unreasonable to those, who will have heaven itself without any condition, I abolish the distinction between my old sermon, and the additions that guard or strengthen it; and referring

ring the reader to the title page, I publish my discourse on Rom. xi. 5, 6, as a *guarded* sermon, delivered in my church on Sunday April the 18th, &c. 1773, exactly eleven † years after I had preached upon the same text a sermon useful upon the whole; but in some places unguarded, and deficient with respect to the *variety* of arguments and motives, by which the capital doctrines of *free grace* and *gospel obedience* ought to be enforced.

III. With regard to the SCRIPTURAL ESSAY upon the rewardableness, or evangelical worthiness of works, I shall just observe, that it attacks the grand mistake of the Solifidians, countenanced by three or four words of my old sermon. I pour a flood of scriptures upon it; and after receiving the fire of my objector, I return it in a variety of scriptural and rational answers, about the solidity of which the public must decide.

IV. The ESSAY ON TRUTH will, I hope, reconcile judicious moralists to the doctrine of salvation *by faith*, and considerate solifidians to the doctrine of salvation *by the works* of faith; reason and scripture concurring to show the constant dependance of works upon faith; and the wonderful agreement of the doctrine of present salvation by TRUE *faith*, with the doctrine of eternal salvation by GOOD *works*.

I hope, that I do not dissent, in my observations upon *faith*, either from our Church, or approved gospel-ministers. In their *highest* definitions of that grace, they consider it *only* according to the fulness of the *christian* dispensation; but my subject has obliged me to consider it also according to the dispensations of John the Baptist, Moses, and Noah. Believers, under these *inferior* dispensations, have not always *assurance*; nor is the assurance they sometimes have so bright as that of adult christians, Mat. xi. 11.* But undoubtedly assurance is inseparably connected with the faith of the *christian* dispensation, which was not *fully* opened, till

* My old sermon was preached on Sunday April 18, 1762, and not 1764, as Mr. H. thro' some mistake informs the public.

till Christ opened *his* glorious baptism on the day of pentecost, and till his spiritual kingdom was set up with power in the heart of his people. No body therefore can truly believe, according to *this* dispensation, without being *immediately* conscious both of the forgiveness of sins, and of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. This is a most important truth, derided indeed by fallen churchmen, and denied by Laodicean Dissenters; but of late years gloriously revived by Mr. Wesley and the ministers connected with him:—A truth this, which cannot be too strongly, and yet too warily insisted upon in our lukewarm and speculative age: And as I would not obscure it for the world, I particularly intreat the reader to mind the last *erratum*; without omitting the last but one, which guards the doctrine of *initial* salvation by absolute *free* grace.

I do not desire to provoke my able Opponents; but I must own, I should be glad to reap the benefit of my *Checks*, either by finding an increase of religious sobriety and mutual forbearance among those, who make a peculiar profession of faith in Christ; or by seeing my mistakes [if I am mistaken] brought to light, that I might no longer recommend them as gospel-truths. With this view only, I humbly intreat my brethren and fathers in the church, to point out *by scripture* or *argument* the doctrinal errors, that may have crept into the *Equal Check*. But if, upon close examination, they should find, that it holds forth the two gospel-axioms in due conjunction, and marks out the *evangelical mean* with strict impartiality; I hope, the moderate and judicious, in the Calvinistic and anti-Calvinistic party, will so far unite upon this plan, as to keep on terms of reciprocal toleration, and brotherly kindness together; rising with redoubled indignation, not one against another, but against those pests of the religious world, *prejudice* and *bigotry*, the genuine parents of implacable fanaticism, and bloody persecution.

Madeley, May 21, 1774.

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E R R A T A.

Pape 89, last word, read *mistake*. — p. 21, l. 7, read *flamina*. — p. 93, l. 5, *properly*, read *powerfully*. — p. 140, l. 18, before *salvation* add *eternal*. — p. 143, l. 3, *believing heartily*, read, ONLY *believing confidently*. — p. 228, last line but one, *two*, read, *five*.

A N
HISTORICAL ESSAY

Upon the importance and harmony of the two gospel-precepts, Believe and Obey ; and upon the fatal consequences that flow from parting Faith and Works.

WHEN the gospel is considered as opposed to the error of the pharisees, and that of the antinomians, it may be summed up in the two following propositions : (1) In the day of conversion, we are saved freely as sinners [i. e. made freely partakers of the privileges that belong to our gospel dispensation in the church militant] thro' the merits of Christ, and by the instrumentality of a living faith. (2) In the day of judgment we shall be saved freely as saints, [i. e. made freely partakers of the privileges of our gospel dispensation in the church triumphant] thro' the merits of Christ, and by the evidence of evangelical works. Whence it follows : (1) that nothing can absolutely hinder our justification in a gospel day, but the want of true faith ; and (2) that nothing will absolutely hinder our justification in the day of judgment, but the want of good works. If I am not mistaken, all the evangelical doctrine of faith and works turns upon those propositions. They exactly answer to the grand directions of the gospel. Wilt thou enter into Christ's sheepfold ? *Believe*. — Wilt thou stay there ? *Believe and obey*. — Wilt thou be numbered among his sheep in the great day ? *Endure unto the end : Continue in well doing* : that is, Persevere in faith and obedience.

To *believe* then and *obey*, or as Solomon expresses it, *To fear God and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man*. Therefore a professor of the faith without genuine obedience, and a pretender to obedience

without genuine faith, equally miss their aim ; while a friend to faith and works put in their proper place, a possessor of the *faith* which *works* by love, hits the gospel mark, and so runs as to obtain the prize : for the same *true and faithful Witness* spoke the two following, and equally express declarations. *He that BELIEVETH on the Son hath everlasting life ; and he that BELIEVETH NOT the Son shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* John iii. 36. And, *The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall come forth, they that have DONE GOOD, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have DONE EVIL, unto the resurrection of condemnation.* John v. 29.

 See that sculler upon yonder river. The unwearyed diligence and watchful skill, with which he plies his two oars, points out to us the work and wisdom of an experienced divine. What an even, gentle spring does the mutual effort of his oars give to his boat ! Observe him : his right hand never rests, but when the stream carries him too much to the left : he slacks not his left hand, unless he is gone too much to the right ; nor has he sooner recovered a just medium, than he uses both oars again with mutual harmony. Suppose that for a constancy he employed but one, no matter which, what would be the consequence ? He would only move in a circle ; and if neither wind nor tide carried him along, after an hard day's work he would find himself in the very spot, where he began his idle toil.

This illustration needs very little explaining : I shall just observe that the antinomian is like a sculler, who uses only his right-hand oar ; and the pharisee, like him who plies only the oar in his left hand. One makes an endless bustle about *grace* and *faith*, the other about *charity* and *works* : but both, after all, find themselves exactly in the same case ; with this single difference, that one has turned from truth to the right, and the other to the left.

Not so the judicious, unbiassed preacher, who will safely enter the haven of eternal rest, for which he and his hearers are bound. He makes an equal use
of

of the doctrine of *faith* and that of *works*. If at any time he insists most upon *faith*, it is only when the stream carries his congregation upon the pharisaic shallows on the left hand : And if he lays a preponderating stress upon *works*, it is only when he sees unwary souls sucked into the antinomian whirlpool on the right hand. His skill consists in so avoiding one danger as not to run upon the other.

Nor ought this watchful wisdom to be confined to ministers : for tho' all are not called to direct congregations ; yet all moral agents are, and always were, more or less called to direct themselves, that is, to *occupy till* the Lord comes, by making a proper use of their *talents* according to the parable, Mat. xxv. 15, to 31. God gave to angels and man "*remigium alarum*," the two oars, or if you please, the equal wings of *faith* and *obedience* ; charging them to use those grand powers, according to their original wisdom and enlightened conscience. Or, to speak without metaphor, he created them in such a manner, that they *believed* it their duty, interest, and glory, to *obey* him without reserve ; and this *faith* was naturally productive of an universal, delightful, perfect *obedience*. Nor would they ever have been wanting in *practice*, if they had not first wavered in *principle*. But when Lucifer had unaccountably persuaded himself, in part at least, either that obedience was mean, or that rebellion would be advantageous ; and when the crafty Tempter had made our first parents believe in part, that if they ate of the forbidden fruit, far from dying they should *be as God* himself ; how possible, how easy was it for them to venture upon an act of rebellion !—By rashly playing with the Serpent, and sucking in the venom of his crafty insinuations, they soon gave their *faith* a wilful wound, and their *obedience* naturally died of it : But alas ! it did not die unrevengeed ; for no sooner had *fainting faith* given birth to a *dead work*, than she was destroyed by her spurious offspring. Thus *Faith* and *Obedience*, that couple more lovely than David and his friend, more inseparable than Saul

and Jonathan, in their death were not divided. They even met with a common grave, the corrupt atrocious breast of a rebellious angel, or of apostate man.

Nor does St. James give us a less melancholy account of this fatal event. While faith slumbered, *lust conceived, and brought forth sin, and sin finished, brought forth death*, the death of faith, and consequently the *moral death* of angelic spirits and human souls, who equally live by faith † during their state of probation. So fell Lucifer from heaven, to rule and rage in the darkness of this world: So fell Adam from paradise, to toil and die in this vale of tears: So fell Judas from an apostolic throne, to hang himself and go to his own place.

Nor can we rise but in a way parallel to that by which they fell. For, as a *disbelief* of our CREATOR, productive of *bad works*, sunk our first parents; so a *faith* in our REDEEMER, productive of *good works*, must instrumentally raise their fallen posterity.

Should you ask, which is most necessary to salvation, *faith* or *works*; I beg leave to propose a similar question. Which is most essential to breathing, *inspiration* or *expiration*? If you reply, that "The moment either is absolutely at an end, so is the other; and therefore both are equally important;" I return exactly the same answer. If *humble faith* receives the breath of spiritual life; *obedient love* gratefully returns it, and makes way for a fresh supply: when it does not, the spirit is *grieved*; and if this want of co-operation

† Faith in God as *Creator, Lawgiver, and Judge*, was not less necessary to Lucifer and Adam in order to their standing in a state of innocence, than Faith in God as *Redeemer, Sanctifier, and Rewarder* of them that diligently seek him, is necessary to *sinners*, in order to their recovery from a state of guilt; or to *believers* in order to avoid relapses and final apostasy. Faith therefore, so far as it implies an unshaken confidence in God, and a firm adherence to his will, is as eternal as love and obedience. But when it is considered as *the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*, which are essential properties of a believer's faith in this present state of things, it is evident that it will necessarily end in sight, as soon as the curtain of time is drawn up; and terminate in enjoyment, as soon as God's glory appears without a veil.

ration is persisted in to the end of *the day of salvation*, the sin unto death is committed, the spirit is *quenched* in his saving operation, the apostate dies the second death, and his corrupt soul is cast into the bottomless pit, as a putrid corpse into the noisome grave.

Again, if faith has the advantage over works by giving them birth, works have the advantage over faith by perfecting it. *Seest thou*, says St. James, speaking of the Father of the faithful, *how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?* And if St. Paul affirms, that *works without faith are dead*, St. James maintains, that *faith without works is dead also*.

Once more, Christ is always the primary, original, properly-meritorious cause of our justification and salvation. To dispute it is to renounce the faith, and to plead for antichrist. And yet, to deny, that, under this primary cause, there are secondary, subordinate, instrumental causes of our justification, and consequently of our salvation, is to set the bible aside, and fly in the face of judicious Calvinists, who cannot help maintaining it, both from the pulpit and from the press. † Now if in the day of our conversion

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faith

† The Rev. Mr. Madan does not scruple to call *our faith* "the *instrumental cause*" of our justification. See his sermon on James ii. 24, printed by Fuller, London, 1761, page 18. And if we shall be justified in the day of judgment *BY our words*, they shall undoubtedly be at least an *evidencing cause* of our final justification. Hence it is that the same judicious divine speaks [p. 30, l. 4, &c.] of our being "justified in this threefold sense of the word, *meritoriously* by Christ, *instrumentally* by faith, and *declaratively* by works, which "are the fruits of faith."

The reader will permit me to illustrate the essential difference there is between *primary* and *secondary* causes, by the manner in which David became Saul's son-in-law. The *primary* causes of this event were undoubtedly, on God's part, assisting power and wisdom; and on king Saul's part, a free promise of giving his daughter in marriage to the man, who should kill Goliath. The *secondary* causes [according to the Rev. Mr. Madan's plan] may be divided into *instrumental* and *declarative*. The *instrumental* causes of David's honourable match, were his *faith*, his *sling*, his *stone*, Goliath's *sword*, &c.: And the *declarative* or *evidencing* causes, were his *works*. He insists upon fighting

faith is the secondary, subordinate cause of our acceptance as penitent sinners; in the day of judgment works, even the works of faith, will be the secondary subordinate cause of our acceptance as persevering saints. Let us therefore equally decry dead faith and dead works, equally recommend living faith and its important fruits.

Hitherto I have endeavoured to check the rapid progress of speculative antinomianism, that perpetually decries works, and centers in the following paragraph, which presents without disguise the doctrine of the absolute, unconditional perseverance of adulterous believers, and incestuous saints.

Saving faith being immortal, can not only subsist without the help of good works; but no aggravated crimes can give it a finishing stroke. A believer may in cool blood murder a man, after having seduced his wife, without exposing himself to the least real danger of forfeiting either his heavenly inheritance, or the divine favour: because his *salvation*, which is *finished in the full extent of the word*, without any of his good works, cannot possibly be frustrated by any of his evil ones.

It will not be improper now to attempt a check to pharisaism, which perpetually opposes faith, and whose destructive errors collected in one position may
run

ing the giant, he renounces carnal weapons, puts on the armour of God, runs to meet his adversary, slings a fortunate stone, brings his adversary down, flies upon him, and cuts off his head. By *these* works he was evidenced a person duly qualified to marry the princess; or, to keep to the Rev. Mr. Madan's expression, "by" these "*works*" he was "*declaratively*" judged a man fit to be rewarded with the hand of the princess. Now is it not clear, that his *works*, upon the evidence of which he received such a reward, had as important a part in his obtaining it, as the faith and sling by whose *instrumentality* he wrought the works? And is it not strange that the Rev. Mr. Madan should be an orthodox divine, when he says, that "*we are declaratively justified by works*," and that Mr. Wesley should be a dreadful heretick for saying, that we are *saved not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition*; or in other terms, that we are finally justified not by works as the *primary, meritorious cause*; but as a *secondary, evidencing, declarative cause*?



run thus : — If people perform external acts of worship towards God, and of charity towards their neighbour ; their principles † are good enough : and should they be faulty, these good works will make ample amends for that deficiency. — Upon this common plan of doctrine, if the filthy sepulchre is but whitewashed, and the noisome grave adorned with a flowery turf, it little matters what is within, whether it be *a dead man's bones*, a dead heart swelled with pride, or *all manner of corruption*.

It is hard to say, who do christianity most disservice, the solifidians, who assert that works are nothing *before God* ; or the pharisees, who maintain that certain religious ceremonies, and external duties of morality are the very soul of religion. O thou, true believer, bear thy testimony against both their errors ; and equally contend for the tree and the fruit, the faith of St. Paul and the works of St. James ; remembering that if ever the gates of hell prevail against thee, it will be by making thee over-value faith and despise good works, or over-rate works and slight *precious faith*.

The world, I grant, is full of Gallios, easy or busy men, who seldom trouble themselves about faith or works, law or gospel. Their latitudinarian principles perfectly agree with their loose conduct : and if their volatile minds are fixed, it is only by a steady adherence to such commandments as these : “ Be not righteous over much : — Get and spend : — Marry or be given in marriage : — Eat and drink : — Lie down to sleep and rise up to play : — Care neither for heaven nor hell : — Mind all of earth but the awful spot allotted thee for a *grave* : &c.” However, while they punctually observe this decalogue, their conscience

is

† The ingenious author of a new book, called *Essays on public worship, patriotism, &c* : does not scruple to send such an exhortation abroad into the world. “ Let us substitute honesty instead of faith. “ It is the only foundation of a moral character, and it ought to be the only test of our religion. It should not signify what, or how little a man believed, if he was honest. — This would put christianity upon the best footing.” See the *Monthly Review* for March 1773.

② is sometimes awakened to a sense of corroding guilt, commonly called uneasiness, or low spirits: and if they cannot shake it off by new scenes of dissipation, new plunges into sensual gratifications, new schemes of hurrying business; if a religious concern fastens upon their breaths, the Tempter deludes them, by making his false coin pass for the *gold tried in the fire*. If his dupes will have *faith*, he makes them take up with that of the *antinomians*. If they are for *works*, he recommends to them those of the *self-righteous*. And if some seem cut out to be brands in the church; fiery, persecuting, implacable zealots; he gives them a degree in the university of Babel: One is a *Batchelor* of the science of sophistry, an other a *Master* of the liberal art of calumny, and a third a *Doctor* in human, or diabolical *divinity*: But if all these graduates have not as much faith as Simon Magus, or as many works as the conceited pharisee; yet they may have as much zeal for the church as the bigot, who set out from Jerusalem for Damascus in pursuit of heretics. They may sometimes pursue those, who dissent from them, even unto *strange cities*.

* Has not the world always swarmed with those devotees, who, blindly following after *faith* without loving obedience, or after *obedience* without loving faith, have *made havock of the church*, and driven myriads of worldly men to a settled contempt of godliness: while a few, by equally standing up for true faith and universal obedience, have alone kept up the honour of religion in the world? Take a general view of the church, and you will see this observation confirmed by a variety of black, bright, and mixt characters.

* * The first man born of a woman, is a striking picture of perverted mankind. He is at once a sullen pharisee, and a gross antinomian: he sacrifices to God, and murders his brother. Abel, the illustrious type of converted sinners, truly believes, and acceptably sacrifices. *Faith* and *works* shine in his life with equal lustre; and in his death we see what the godly may

may expect from the *impious* church and the *pious* world. Protomartyr for the doctrine of *this* check, he falls the first innocent victim to *pharisaical* pride and *antinomian* fury. *The sons of God* mix with the *daughters of men*, learn their works, and make shipwreck of the *faith*. Enoch nevertheless truly believes in God, and humbly walks with him : *Faith* and *works* equally adorn his character. The world is soon full of *misbelief*, and the earth of *violence*. Noah however believes and works : he credits God's word, and builds the ark. This work condemns the world, and he becomes heir of the *righteousness* which is by FAITH.

Consider Abraham ; see how he believes and works ! God speaks, and he leaves his house, his estate, his friends, and native country. His faith works by love : he exposes his life to recover his neighbour's property, he readily gives up to Lot his right of choice to prevent a quarrel, he earnestly intercedes for Sodom, he charitably hopes the best of its wicked inhabitants, he gladly entertains strangers, humbly washes their feet, diligently instructs his household, and submissively offers up Isaac his favourite son, the child of his old age, the hope of his family, his own heir, and that of God's promise : *by these works his faith is made perfect*, and he deserves to be called the *Father of the faithful*.

Moses treads in his steps : he believes, quits Pharaoh's court, and suffers affliction with the people of God. Under his conduct the Israelites believe, obey, and cross the red sea with an high hand ; but soon after they murmur, rebel, and provoke divine vengeance. Thus the destruction, which they had avoided in Goshen thro' *obedient faith*, they meet in the wilderness thro' *the works of unbelief*. Nature is up in arms to punish their backslidings. The pestilence, the sword, earthquakes, fiery serpents, and fire from heaven, combine to destroy the ungrateful, antinomian apostates.

In the days of Joshua, that eminent type of Christ, *faith* and *works* are happily reconciled; and whilst they walk hand in hand, Israel is invincible, the greatest difficulties are surmounted, and the land of promise is conquered, divided, and enjoyed.

Under the next judges *faith* and *works* seldom meet; but as often as they do, a deliverance is wrought in Israel. Working believers carry all before them: *They can do all things thro' the Lord strengthening them*: They are little omnipotents: but if they suffer the antinomian Delilah to cut off their locks, you may apply to them the awful words of David (spoken to magistrates, who forsake the way of righteousness): *I have said, Ye are Gods, and all of you are children of the most High; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes*; like Zimri or Corah, Dathan or Abiram.

The character of Samuel, the last of the judges, is perfect. From the cradle to the grave he *believes* and *works*; he serves God and his generation. His sons, like those of Eli, halt in practice, and their *faith* is an abomination to God and man. David believes, works, and kills the blaspheming Philistine. He slides into antinomian *faith*, wantonly seduces a married woman, and perfidiously kills an honest man. Solomon follows him in the narrow path of working *faith*, and in the broad way of speculative and practical antinomianism. The works of the son correspond with those of the father. Happy for him, if the repentance of the idolatrous king, equalled that of his adulterous parent!

In the days of Elijah, the gates of hell seemed to have prevailed against the church. Queen Jezebel had *cut off the prophets of the Lord*, and appointed 400 chaplains to his majesty king Ahab, who shared the dainties of the royal table, and therefore found it easy to demonstrate, that *pleading for Baal* was orthodoxy, and prosecuting honest Naboth as a *blasphemer of God and the king*, was an instance of true loyalty. But even then all were not lost: Seven thousand men shewed
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their faith by their works; they firmly believed in Jehovah, and steadily refused bowing the knee to Baal.

In the days of Isaiah and Jeremiah, wickedness, persecution, and imaginary good works prevailed under a show of zeal for the temple, and of regard for the people of God. But even then also, there was a *small remnant* of believing and working souls, who set fire to the stubble of wickedness during the pious reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah.

Follow the chosen nation to Babylon. They all profess the faith still: but how few believe and work! Some do however: and by their *work of faith* and *patience of hope* they *quench the violence of the fire*, and *stop the mouths of lions*: and what is more extraordinary still, they strike with astonishment a fierce tyrant, a Nebuchadnezzar; they fill with wonder a cowardly king, a Darius: and disarming the former of his rage, the latter of his fears, they sweetly force them both to confess the true God among their idolatrous courtiers, and, throughout their immense dominions.

In the days of Herod the double delusion is at the height. John the baptist boldly bears his testimony against it in the wilderness, and our Lord upon the mount, in the temple, and every where. But alas! what is the consequence? By detecting the antinomianism of the pharisees, and the pharisaism of antinomians, he makes them desperate. The spirit of Cain rises with tenfold fury against an innocence so far superior to that of Abel. Pharisees and Herodians must absolutely glut their malice with his blood. He yields to their rage; and while he *puts away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, he condescends to die a martyr for the right *faith*, and the true *works*: he seals as a dying *priest* the truth of the two gospel axioms, which he had so often sealed as a living *prophet*, and continues to seal as an eternal *Melchisedec*.

The apostles, by precept and example, powerfully enforce their Lord's doctrine and practice. Their lives are true copies of their exhortations: Their deepest sermons are only exact descriptions of their
behaviour.

behaviour. It is hard to say which excite men most to *believe* and *obey*, their seraphic *discourses* or their angelic *conduct*. Their labours are crowned with general success. Judaism and heathenism are every where struck at, and fall under the *thunder* of their *words of faith*, and the shining power [might I not say the *lightening*] of their *works of love*. Thus the *world is turned upside down* before faith and works; *the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord*; and earth, cursed as it is, becomes a paradise for obedient believers.

Hell trembles at the revolution; and before all is lost, *Satan* hastens to *transform himself into an angel of light*. In that favourable disguise, he puts his usual stratagem in execution, against the believing, working, and suffering church. He instills speculative faith, pleads for relaxed manners, puts the badge of contempt upon the daily cross, and gets the immense body of the Gnostics and Laodiceans into his snare. Sad and sure is the consequence. The genuine works of faith are neglected: Idle works of men's invention are substituted for those of God's commandments. And fallen churches, thro' the *smooth* way of antinomianism, return to the *covert* way of pharisaism, or to the *broad* way of infidelity.

Such was the deplorable condition of the western church when Luther appeared. True faith was dethroned by superstitious fancy; and all the works of the former were well nigh choaked by the thorns that sprang from the latter. The zealous reformer with his sharp scythe, justly cut them down thro' a considerable part of Germany. His terribly-successful weapon, which had already done some execution in the Netherlands, France and Italy, might have reached Rome itself, if the effects of his unguarded preaching had not dreadfully broke out around him in the North.

There the balance of the evangelical precepts was lost. Solifidians openly prevailed. Our Lord's sermon upon the mount, and St. James's epistle, were either explained away, or wished out of the bible.

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The amiable, practicable *law of Christ* was perpetually confounded with the terrible, impracticable *law of innocence* : and the avoidable penalties of the former, were injudiciously represented as one with the dreadful curse of the latter, or with the abrogated ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation. Then the law was publicly wedded to the devil, and poor protestant solidians were taught to bid equal defiance to both.

The effect soon answered the cause. Lawless believers, known under the name of Anabaptists, arose in Germany. They fancied themselves the dear, the elect people of God ; they were compleat in Christ ; their election was absolutely made sure ; all things were theirs ; and they went about in religious mobs to deliver people from *legal bondage*, and bring them into *gospel-liberty*, which, in their opinion, was a liberty to despise all laws divine and human, and to do, every one, what was right in his own eyes. Luther was shocked and cried out ; but the mischief was done, and the reformation disgraced : nor did he perseveringly apply the proper remedy pointed out in the minutes, *salvation not by the merit of works, but by the works of faith as a condition*.

Nevertheless he was wise enough to give up the root of the mischief in the Lutheran articles of religion, presented to the Emperor Charles the Vth at Augsburg, whence they were called the *Augsburg-confession*. In the XIIIth of those articles, which treats of repentance, we find these remarkable words, "*We teach touching repentance, that those who have sinned after baptism, may obtain the forgiveness of their sins AS OFTEN AS they are converted,*" &c. Again, "*We condemn the Anabaptists, who say, that those who have been once justified can no more lose the holy spirit.*"

This doctrine clearly opened, and frequently enforced, might have stopped the progress of antinomianism. But alas ! Luther did not often insist upon it, and sometimes he seemed even to contradict it. In the mean time Calvin came-up ; and tho' I must do him the justice to acknowledge, that he seldom went

the length of modern Calvinists in speculative antinomianism, yet he made the matter worse by advancing many unguarded propositions about absolute decrees, and the necessary, final perseverance of backsliding believers.

This doctrine, which, together with its appendages, so nicely reconciles Baal and free Grace; a *little*, or [if the backslider is so minded] a *good deal* of the world, and heaven; this flesh pleasing doctrine, which slyly parts *faith* and *works*, while it decently unites *Christ* and *Belial*, could not but be acceptable to injudicious and carnal Protestants: and to make it pass with others, it was pompously decorated with the name of *the doctrine of grace*; and *free grace-preachers*, as they called themselves, insinuated that St. James's doctrine of *Faith being dead without works*, was a doctrine of wrath, an uncomfortable antichristian doctrine, which none but "proud justiciaries" and rank papists could maintain. Time would fail to mention all the books that were *indirectly* written against it; or to relate all the abuse that was *indirectly* thrown upon these two propositions of St. Paul, *Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap*, and *If ye live after the flesh ye shall die*.

Let it suffice to observe, that by these means the hellish sower of antinomian tares prevailed. Thousands of *good* men were carried away by the stream. And, what is more surprising still, not a few of the *wise* and *learned*, favoured, embraced, and defended the antinomian delusion.

Thus what Luther's solifidian zeal had begun, and what Calvin's predestinarian mistakes had carried on, was readily completed by the synod of Dort; and the antinomianism of *many* protestants, was not less confirmed by that assembly of calvinistic divines; than the pharisaism of *many* papists, had been before by the council of Trent.

It is true that as some good men in the church of Rome, have boldly withstood pharisaical errors, and openly pleaded for salvation by grace thro' faith: so
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some good men in the protestant churches have also steadily resisted antinomian delusions and publicly defended the doctrine of salvation, not by the proper merit of works, but by the works of faith as a condition. But alas! as the Popes of Rome crushed, or excommunicated the former, almost as fast as they arose; so have petty protestant Popes blackened, or silenced the latter. The true Quakers, from their first appearance, have made as firm a stand against the Antinomians, as the Waldenses against the Papists; and it is well known that the Antinomians, who went from England to America with many pious puritans, whipt the Quakers, men and women, cut off their ears, made against them a law of banishment upon pain of death, and upon that tyrannical law hanged four of their preachers, three men and one woman † in the last century, for preaching up the christian perfection of faith and obedience, and so disturbing the peace of the elect, who were *at ease in Sion*, or rather *in Babel*.

I need not mention the title of *heretic*, with which that learned and good man Arminius is to this day dignified, for having made a firm and noble stand against wanton Free Grace. The banishment or deprivation of Grotius, Episcopius, and other Dutch divines, is no secret. And it is well known that in England Mr. Baxter, Mr. Wesley, and Mr. Sellon are to this day *an abhorrence to all antinomian flesh*.

I am sorry to say, that, all things considered, these good men have been treated with as much severity by protestant antinomians; as ever Luther, Melancthon and Calvin were by popish pharisees: The antinomian and pharisaic spirit run as much into one, as the two arms of a river that embraces an island: If they divide for a time, it is only to meet again, and encrease their mutual rapidity. I beg leave to speak my whole mind. It is equally clear from scripture

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† Their names were William Leddra, Marmaduke Stephenson, William Robinson, and Mary Dyer. See *The history of the Quakers*, by Sewell; and *New England judged*, by George Bishop.

and reason, that we must *believe*, in order to be saved consistently with God's *mercy*; and that we must *obey*, in order to be saved consistently with his *holiness*.

x These propositions are the immoveable basis of the two gospel-axioms. Now if I reject either of them, it little matters which. If I blow my brains out, what signifies it, whether I do it by clapping the mouth of a pistol to my *right* or to my *left* temple?

Error moves in a circle: extremes meet in one. A warm, popish pharisee, and a zealous, protestant antinomian, are nearer each other than they imagine. The one will tell you, that by going to mass and confession, he can get a fresh absolution from the priest for any sin that he shall commit: the other, whose mistake is still more pleasing to flesh and blood, assures you that he has already got an eternal absolution, so that "under every state and circumstance he can possibly be in, he is justified from all things, his sins are for ever and for ever cancell'd."

But if they differ a little in the idea of their imaginary priviledges, they have the honour of agreeing in the main point. For, altho' the one makes a great noise about *faith* and *free grace*, and the other about *works* and *true charity*, they exactly meet in *narrow grace* and *despairing uncharitableness*. The pharisee in Jerusalem asserts, that "out of the Jewish church there can be no salvation," and his companions in self-election heartily say *amen*! The pharisee in Rome declares, that "there is no salvation out of the apostolic, Romish church," and all the catholic elect set their seal to the antichristian decree. And the antinomian in London *insinuates* [for he is ashamed to speak quite out in a protestant country] that there is no salvation out of the Calvinistic, predestinarian church. Hence, if you oppose his principles in ever so rational and scriptural a manner, he supposes that you are "quite dark," that all your holiness is "*self-made*," and all your "*righteousness a cob-web spun by a poor spider out of its own bowels*:" and if he allows you a chance for your salvation, it is only upon a supposition,

supposition, that you may yet repent of your opposition to his errors, and turn Calvinist before you die. But might not an inquisitor be as charitable? Might he not hope that the poor heretic, whom he has condemned to the flames, may yet be saved, if he cordially kisses a crucifix, and says *Ave Maria* at the stake?

And now, candid reader, look around, and see what these seemingly opposite errors have done for Christ's church. Before the reformation, christendom was overspread with superstition and fanaticism; and since, with lukewarmness and infidelity. But let us descend to particulars.

+ What has *Pharisaism* done for the church of Rome? It has publicly rent from her all the protestant kingdoms, and secretly turned against her an innumerable multitude of deists: for while bigots continue ridiculous bigots still; men of wit, headed by ingenious infidels, continually pour undeserved contempt upon christianity, thro' the deserved wounds which they give to popery. They represent Christ's rational and humane religion as one of the worst in the world, unjustly charging it with the persecuting spirit, and horrible massacres of those *Catholics* so called, who mangling the truth, and running away with one half of the body of christian divinity, disgrace the whole by childish fooleries, and worse than barbarian uncharitableness.

X — And what does *Pharisaism* for the protestant churches? So far as it prevails, spreads it not around its fatal leaven, a general indifference about heartfelt religion? Turns it not the lively oracles of God into a dead letter, the sacraments into empty ceremonies, the means of grace into rattles to quiet a guilty conscience with, the precious blood of Christ into a *common thing*, his hallowed cross into an inglorious tree, external devotion into a cloak for secret hypocrisy; and some acts of apparent benevolence into the rounds of a ladder, the bottom of which reaches hell,

and behold spiritual fiends [all manner of diabolical tempers] are seen continually *ascending and descending on it* ?

Does it not incline us to despise those who are eminently pious, as if they were out of their senses ; to despair of those who are notoriously wicked, as if they were absolute reprobates ; and to prefer a popular imitator of Barabbas, to a meek follower of Jesus ? Does it not prompt us to lay an undue stress upon trifles, and to make an endless ado about some frivolous circumstance of external worship, while we *pass over judgment, mercy, and the love of God* ? And by that means, does it not confirm modern Herodians in their *antinomianism*, and modern Sadducees in their *infidelity* ? In a word, does it not render the stiff neck stiffer, the blind understanding blinder, the hard heart stouter, the proud spirit more rebellious, more indifferent about mercy, more averse to gospel-grace, more satanical, readier for all the *curses* of the law, and riper for all the *woes* of the gospel ?

But let us consider the other extreme. What has *Calvinism* done for Geneva ? Alas ! it has in a great degree shock'd and driven it into arianism, socinianism, and infidelity. See the account lately given of it in the *French Encyclopedia : Article Geneva*. " Many of the clergy of Geneva [says judicious Mr. D'Alembert] no longer believe the divinity of Jesus Christ, of which Calvin their leader was a zealous defender, and for which he had Servetus † burned, " &c.

† Servetus's heresy is thus described in the xivth of the xl *Articles of religion*, which the ministers of Geneva still subscribe, and which, if I mistake not, were drawn up by Calvin himself. " We likewise detest the devilish imaginations of Servetus, who attributes to our Lord Jesus Christ an imaginary divinity ; for as much as he says, that he is the *idea and pattern of all things* ; and calls him God's son in a personal or formal manner ; and moreover supposes him to have a body made up of three uncreated elements, thus mixing and destroying both the natures of Christ." This heresy of Servetus, which we may well suppose is not placed here in the most favourable light, does not differ much from the sentiment of those English divines,

“ &c : — They believe that there are punishments
 “ in an other world, but only for a limited time ;
 “ thus purgatory, which was one of the chief causes
 “ of the reformation, is now the only punishment
 “ which many protestants admit after death. A new
 “ proof this, that man is a being full of contradic-
 “ tions. To sum up all in one word, the religion of
 “ many pastors at Geneva is *perfect Socinianism*.”

What good has *Calvinism* done in England ? Alas !
 very little. When a bow is bent beyond its proper
 degree of tension, does it not fly to pieces ? When you
 violently pull a tree towards the west, if it recovers
 itself, does it not violently fly to the east ? Has not
 this generally been the case with respect to all the
 truths of God, which have been forced out of their
 scriptural place one way or another ? Calvinism in
 the days of O. Cromwell, was at the very same height
 of splendor, at which Popery had attained in the days
 of king Henry the VIIIth, and they share the same
 downfall. *Mole ruunt suâ*. At the reformation the
 FIRST grand doctrine of christianity, [*salvation by*
grace thro' faith] which had been forced out of its
 place, and almost broken by the papists, fled back
 upon them with such violence, that it shook the holy
 see, frightened the Pope, and made some of the richest
 jewels fall from his triple crown. In like manner the
 SECOND grand doctrine of christianity [*salvation not*
by the proper merit of works, but by the works of faith
as a condition] which had been served by the antino-
 mians just as the first gospel axiom by the papists,
 recovering itself out of their hands, flew back upon
 them

vines, who have considered the Father as the one self existent Unity,
 and the Son as the one infinite *variety* in this eternal *Unity* : so that,
 of course, something in him is the *idea* and *pattern* of all that exists,
 except sin and the curse. Nor is what Dr. Watts says of the super-
 angelical nature of the Logos, and of his appearing in an angelical
 body before his incarnation, so very far from Servetus's doctrine of
 Christ's spiritual and wonderful body, when he appeared as an angel
 to the patriarchs. See the sermons of Peter Sterry, fellow of Ema-
 nuel College, Cambridge, on Psalm xlv. 1, 2. And Dr. Watts's 4th
 dissertation concerning the Trinity,

them with uncommon violence at King Charles's restoration, by an *indirect* blow shook two thousand Calvinist-ministers out of their pulpits; and getting far beyond its scriptural place, began to bear hard upon, and even thrust out the grand doctrine of *salvation by grace*. Thus the absurdity and mischief of antinomianism, began to drive again the generality of English protestants into Pharisaism, Arianism, Socinianism, or open infidelity; that is, into the state, in which most of the learned are at Rome and Geneva.

I grant that near forty years ago, some clergymen from the university of Oxford returned to the principles of the reformation, and zealously contended again for *salvation by grace* and for *universal obedience*. By the divine blessing upon their indefatigable endeavours, *Faith* and *Works* met again, and for some time walked undisturbed together. A little revolution then took place: *Practical Christianity* revived, and leaning upon her fair daughters *Truth* and *Love*, took a solemn walk thro' the kingdom, and gave a foretaste of heaven to all that cordially entertained her.

She might, by this time, have turned this favourite isle into a land flowing with spiritual milk and honey, if Apollyon disguised in his angelic robes, had not played, and did not continue to play his old game. Nor does he do it in vain. By his insinuations men of a contrary turn rise against *Practical Christianity*. Many of the devout call her *Heresy*, and many of the gay name her *rank Enthusiasm*. In the mean time she drops a tear of tender pity, prays for her mistaken persecutors, and quietly retires into the wilderness. *Lean Obedience* is soon driven after her to make more room for speculative *Faith*, who is so highly fed with luscious food and wild honey, that she is quite bloated, and full of humours. Nay, in some she is degenerated into an impatient quarrelsome something, which calls itself *Orthodoxy*, or *the Truth*, and must be treated with the greatest respect; while *Charity*, cold, sickly, and almost starved for want of *work*, is hardly used with common good manners.

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In a word, *Antinomian Christianity* is come, and makes her public entry in the professing church. A foolish virgin, who assumes the name of *Free Grace*, walks before her, and cries, "Bend the knee, bow the heart, and entertain the old, the pure, the only gospel." An ugly black boy called *Free-Wrath*, bears her enormous train, and with wonderful art hides himself behind it. While thousands are taken with the smiles and cheerfulness of *Wanton Free Grace* [for that is the virgin's right name] and for her sake welcome her painted mother; a grey-headed Seer passes by, fixes his keen eyes upon the admired family, sees thro' their disguise, and warns his friends. This is highly resented, not only by all the lovers of the sprightly, alluring maid, but by some excellent people, who, in the simplicity of their hearts, mistake her for the celestial virgin *Astrea*. Mr. H. and Mr. T. two of her champions, fall upon the aged Monitor; and to the great entertainment of the pharisaic and antinomian world, do their best to tread down his honour in the dust.

While they are thus employed, a rough countryman, who had taken the Seer's warning, throws himself full in the way of *Antinomian Christianity*, and tries to stop her in her triumphant march. *Wanton Free Grace* is a little disconcerted at his rudeness, she reddens, and soon shews herself the true sister of *Free-Wrath*. To be revenged of the clown, she charges him with—guess what—A rape: No, but with being great with *the scarlet whore*, and concerned with the *Romish man of sin*. If he is acquitted of these enormities, they say that she is determined to indite him for murder or "*forgery*;" and if that will not do, for highway robbery, or "*execrable Swiss slander*." The mountaineer, who counts not his life dear, stands his ground, and in the scuffle discovers the *black boy*, lays fast hold of him, and notwithstanding the good words that he gives one moment, and the floods of invectives, which he pours out the next; he drags him out to public view, and appeals to the christian world. *Et adhuc sub judice lis est.* But

But leaving England, the scene of the present controversy, I ask, What does *Calvinism* at this day for Scotland, where national honours are paid to it, and where for some ages it has passed for the pure gospel? Alas! not much, if we may depend upon the observations of a gentleman of piety and fortune, who went last year with an eminent minister of Christ, to inspect the state of spiritual christianity in the north, and brought back this melancholy account: "The decay of vital religion is yet more visible in Scotland than in England."

Should by this time some of my readers be ready to ask, what *Arminianism* has done for Holland and England; I reply: If by *Arminianism* you mean the pure doctrine of Christ, especially the doctrine of our free justification thro' Christ, by the *instrumentality* of faith in the day of a sinner's conversion, and by the *evidence* of the works of faith afterwards: if you mean, as I do, a system of evangelical truth, in which the two gospel precepts *believe* and *obey* are duly balanced, and *faith* and *works* kept in their scriptural place; I answer that, under Christ, it has done all the good which has been done, not only in Holland and England, but in all Christendom.

Be not then mistaken: When ministers, leaning towards speculative antinomianism, have done good; it has not been by *preaching wanton free grace*, and by *shackling the free gospel*: but by powerfully enforcing *the truth as it is in Jesus*; by crying aloud, "*Believe, thou lost sinner, and be saved by grace — Obey, thou happy believer, and evidence thy salvation by works — And whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely, for all things are now ready.*" — So far as they have started aside from this guarded, and yet encouraging gospel, they have pulled down with one hand what they built with the other; they have tried to make up the *pharisaic*, by widening the *antinomian* gap; they have departed from what *we* call *Christianity*, and what *you* are at full liberty to call *Arminianism*, *Baxterianism*, or *Wesleyanism*.
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To return : I observed just now, that antinomianism drives us into *pharisaism*, *socinianism*, and *infidelity* ; but might I not have added *fatalism*, the highest degree of fashionable infidelity ? And after all, what is *fatalism*, in which the greatest infidels unanimously shelter themselves in our day ? Is it not the beginning or the end of high *Calvinism*, whose emblematical representation may be a serpent forming a circle while it bites its tail, with this motto, *In sese volvitur error*, *After a large circuit Error ends where it began* ? If high *Calvinism* is the head, is not *Fatalism* the tail ?

For my part I shall not wonder, if some of our high predestinarians find themselves before they are aware, even at Hobb's or Voltaire's feet, humbly learning there the horrible lessons of *Fatalism*. Nay, if I am not mistaken, they perfectly agree with the French philosopher in the capital point. One might think that they have converted him to their orthodoxy, or that he has perverted them to his infidelity. Candid reader, judge of it by the following extract of his lecture on *Destiny*.

“ Homer [says he] is the first writer, in whose
 “ works we find the notion of *fate*. It was then in
 “ vogue in his time. Nor was it adopted by the
 “ pharisees, till many years after : for these pharisees
 “ themselves, who were the first men of letters among
 “ the Jews, were not very ancient, &c. But philoso-
 “ phers needed neither the help of Homer, nor that
 “ of the Pharisees, to persuade themselves, that all
 “ things happen by immutable decrees, that *all is*
 “ *fixed, that all is necessary*.” Now for the proof.
 “ Bodies [adds he] tend to the center, pear trees can
 “ never bear pine apples, a man cannot have above
 “ a certain number of teeth” — And directly flying
 from *teeth* to *ideas*, he would have us infer, that
 we can no more arrange, combine, alter, or dismiss
 our ideas than our grinders, and that an adulterer de-
 files his neighbour's bed as *necessarily* as a pear tree pro-
 duces pears. — He even adds, “ If thou couldst alter
 “ the destiny of a fly, thou shouldst be more powerful
 “ than

" than God himself." See *Dictionnaire Philosophique portatif*, Londres, 1764. Page 163, 164.

This ingenious infidel is quite as *orthodox* (in the Calvinistic sense of the word) in his article on *Liberty*. "What does then your free will consist in [says he] if it is not in a power to do *willingly* what *absolute necessity* makes you chuse?" Nay, he is so staunch a predestinarian, so compleat a fatalist, that he maintains, no one can chuse *even or odds* without an irresistible order of all-directing fate. And he concludes by affirming, that all "*liberty of indifference*," that is, all power to do a thing, or to leave it undone at our option, without the necessitating agency of fate, "*is arrant nonsense*." See the same book, page 243, &c.

Thus the most subtle, self-righteous infidel in France by going full east; and the most rigid, thorough-paced antinomian in England by going full west, in the ways of Error, meet at last face to face in the antipodes of Truth. O may the shock caused by their unexpected encounter, wake them both out of their fatal dreams, to call upon him, who *takes the wise in their own craftiness*, imparts true wisdom to the simple, and crowns the humble with grace and glory.

As high *Calvinism* on the left hand falls in with *fatalism*, so on the right hand it runs into the wildest notions of some deluded mystics, and ranting perfectionists. Judicious reader, you will be convinced of it by the following propositions, advanced by Molinos† the father of the mystics and perfectionists, who are known abroad under the name of *Quietists*. These positions, among many others, were condemned by the Pope as "rash, offensive to pious ears, erroneous, scandalous, &c." I extract them from the Bull of his Holiness, given at Rome 1687, and published by the archbishop of Cambray at the end of his book called *Instruction pastorale*, printed at Amsterdam 1698. See page 192, &c.

† He was a pious, but injudicious clergyman of the church of Rome, who, in some of his works, spoiled the doctrine of *grace* by Calvinistic refinements; and that of *christian perfection* by antinomian rant.

“ *Velle operari active est Deum offendere, qui vult esse solus agens, &c.* To be willing to be active and work, is to offend God, who will be the sole agent, &c. — Our natural activity stands in the way of grace, and hinders the divine operation and true perfection, *quia Deus vult operari in nobis sine nobis*, because God will work in us without us. — The soul ought not to think upon rewards and punishments. — We must leave to God the caring of all that concerns us, that he may do in us, without us, his divine will. — He that will be resigned to God’s will, must not ask him any thing, because petitions savour of our own will, and therefore are imperfect;” [or, to speak in the Calvinistic way, *sinful*.]

Again, “ God, to humble and transform us, permits and wills, that the devil should do violence to the bodies of some perfect souls” [*i. e. established believers*] “ and should make them commit carnal actions against their will. — God now sanctifies his saints by the ministry of devils, who by causing in their flesh the above-mentioned violent impulses, makes them despise themselves the more, &c. — St. Paul felt such violent impulses in his body: hence he wrote, *The good that I would, I do not; and the evil which I would not, I do.* These violent impulses are the best means to humble the soul to nothing, and to bring it to true holiness, and the divine union; there is no other way, *et hæc est via faciliior et tutior*, and this is the easier and the safer way. — David, &c. suffered such violent impulses to external impure actions, &c.”

Who does not see here some of the most absurd tenets, or dangerous consequences of Calvinism! Man is a mere machine in the work of salvation — The body of holy Paul is sold under sin — David in Uriah’s bed is complete and perfect in Christ — Actual adultery humbles believers, and is an excellent mean of sanctification, &c.

D

When

When we see antinomianism thus defiling the sounder part of the Romish and Protestant churches; when the god of this world avails himself of these "antinomian dotages" to confirm myriads of stiff pharisees in their self-righteous delusions; and when the bulk of men, shocked at the glaring errors of both, run for shelter to deism, and gross infidelity; who would not desire to see the doctrines of *faith* and *works*, *grace* and *obedience* so stated and reconciled, that *men of reason* might no longer be offended at christianity; nor *men of religion* one at another?

This is again *attempted* in the following discourse, the substance of which was committed to paper many years ago, to convince the pharisees and papists of my parish, that there is no salvation by the faithless works of the law, but by a living faith in Jesus Christ. With shame I confess, that I did not *then* see the need of guarding the doctrine of *faith*, against the despisers of *works*. I was chiefly bent upon pulling up the tares of pharisaism: Those of antinomianism were not yet sprung up in the field, which I began to cultivate: or my want of experience hindered me from discerning them. But since, what a crop of them have I perceived and bewailed!

Alas! they have in a great degree ruined the success of my ministry. I have seen numbers of lazy seekers, enjoying the dull pleasure of sloth on the couch of wilful unbelief, under pretence that God was to do all in them without them. I have seen some lie flat in the mire of sin, absurdly boasting that they could not fall; and others make the means of grace, means of idle gossiping or sly courtship. I have seen some turn their religious profession into a way of gratifying covetousness or indolence; and others, their skill in church-music, their knowledge, and their zeal, into various nets to catch esteem, admiration, and praise. Some have I seen making *yesterday's* faith a reason to laugh at the cross *to-day*; and others drawing from their misapprehensions of the atonement, arguments to be less importunate in secret prayer and
more

more conformable to this evil world, than once they were. Nay, I have seen some professing believers backward to do those works of mercy, which I have sometimes found persons, who made no profession of godliness, quite ready to perform. And Oh! tell it in Sion, that watchfulness may not be neglected by believers, that fearfulness may seize upon backsliders, and that trembling may break the bones of hypocrites and apostates; I have seen those, who had equally shined by their gifts and graces, strike the moral world with horror by the grossest antinomianism; and disgrace the doctrine of *salvation thro' faith*, by the deepest plunges into scandalous sin.

Candid Reader, I need say no more, to make thee sensible of the necessity of the *additions and notes*, by which I have strengthened and guarded my old discourse, that it might be an *EQUAL Check to pharisaism and antinomianism*, an equal prop to *faith and works*. If it affords thee any edification, give God the glory, and pray for the despised author. Ask in the words of good Bishop Hopkins, that I may so *BELIEVE, so rest on the merits of Christ, as if I had never wrought any thing; and withal so WORK, as if I were only to be saved by my own merits*. And O! ask it again and again, for I find it a *difficult thing, to give to each of these its due in my practice*. It is the very depth and height of christian perfection.

END OF THE ESSAY.



P O S T S C R I P T.

Madeley, Jan. 10, 1774.

ABOVE fifteen years ago I looked into Baxter's Aphorisms on Justification, and thro' prejudice or sloth I soon laid them down, as being too deep for me. But a few days since a friend having brought me Mr. Wesley's extract of them, I have read it with much satisfaction, and present my readers with a compendium of my discourse in the words of those two judicious and laborious divines.

'As there are two covenants, with their distinct conditions; so is there a two-fold righteousness, and both of them absolutely necessary to salvation. — Our righteousness of the first covenant, is not personal, or consisteth not in any actions performed by us; for we never personally satisfied the law' [of innocence] 'but it is wholly without us in Christ. In this sense every christian disclaimeth his own righteousness, or his own works — Those only shall be in Christ legally righteous, who believe and obey the gospel, and so are in themselves evangelically righteous — Tho' Christ performed the conditions of the law' [of innocence] 'and satisfied for our non-performance, yet it is ourselves that must perform the conditions of the gospel — These two [last] propositions seem to me so clear, that I do wonder any able divines should deny them: Methinks they should be articles of our creed, and a part of children's catechisms. [To affirm that our evangelical or new-covenant righteousness is in Christ, and not in ourselves; or performed by Christ, and not by ourselves; is such a monstrous piece of antinomian doctrine, as no man, who knows the nature and difference of the covenants can possibly entertain.] *Bax. Aphor. Prop. 14, 15, 16, 17.*

Salvation

Salvation by the Covenant of Grace :

A

D I S C O U R S E

ON ROMANS xi. 5, 6.

Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace : And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace : But if it be of works, then it is no more grace ; otherwise work is no more work.

INTRODUCTION and DIVISION.

THE Apostle complains in the preceding chapter, that Israel was blinded, and did not see the way of salvation : *I bear them record*, says he, Rom. x, 2, *that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge ; for being ignorant of God's righteousness, i. e. of God's way of saving sinners † merely thro' Jesus Christ, and going about to establish their own righte-*

D 3

eousness,

(1) † When I say that God saves sinners “merely” thro’ Jesus Christ, I do not exclude our *faith*, the *instrumental cause* of our salvation ; nor our *works of faith*, the *evidencing cause* of it ; any more than I exclude divine mercy. I only mean, that Christ is the *primary, meritorious cause* of our justification ; and that from him all *secondary, instrumental causes* receive whatever influence they have towards our eternal salvation. Nor do I take away from the Redeemer’s glory, when I affirm with the Rev. Mr. Madan, that “*we are justified instrumentally by faith, and declaratively by works ;*” or that faith is the *instrumental*, and works are the *declarative cause* of our complete justification. For as I speak of faith in Christ, *the Light of men and the Saviour of the world* ; and as I mean *the works of that faith* ; I secure his mediatorial honours ; such works being all wrought thro’ *his* influence, perfumed with *his* merits, and accepted thro’ *his* intercession. Christ is then *all in all* still ; the primary and meritorious cause passing thro’ all the secondary, and instrumental causes, as light does thro’ our windows and eyes ; food thro’ our mouths and stomachs ; and vital blood thro’ our arteries and veins.

N. B. The parts of this discourse, which are enclosed in brackets, [] are the additions that guard or strengthen the old sermon which my opponent calls for ; and the parts contained between the two hands,  are the passages, which he has extracted from it, and published at the end of his Finishing Stroke.

teousness, that is, endeavouring to save themselves by their own good works [so called, by works which, strictly speaking, deserve rather to be named pharisaical than good ;] *they have not submitted to the righteousness of God* — to that faith in Christ, which makes sinners righteous before God : *for Christ*, adds he, *is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Rom. x. 4 ; That is, [since the fall] it is the very design of the [Adamic] law, [the law of innocence given to sinless Adam ; yea, and of the Mosaic law, when it is considered as *written in stones*, and decorated with shadows or types of good things to come,] to bring men to believe in Christ for justification and salvation : as he alone gives that pardon and life, which the law [of innocence] shews the want of, [and which the Mosaic law, abstracted from gospel-promises, points unto,] but cannot possibly bestow.

The Apostle resuming the same subject in the chapter out of which the text is taken, comforts himself by considering, that, altho' Israel in general was blinded, yet *all* were not lost. Old Simeon and Anna had *seen the salvation of God*, and had *departed in peace*, Nicodemus, a doctor in Israel, had received the doctrine of the new birth and salvation by faith. *Three thousand* Jews had been *pricked to the heart* by penitential sorrow, and *filled with peace and joy* by believing in Jesus Christ. And *even at this present time*, says the Apostle, *there is a remnant* [of my country-men saved] *according to the election of grace* : That is, There are some of them, who, [like Nathaniel and Nicodemus] casting away their dependance on their own righteousness, [and trusting only in Christ's merits] are numbered among the *elect*, according to that gracious *decree of* [election in Christ, which] God [has so clearly revealed] in the covenant of grace, *He that believeth shall be saved*, &c. Mark xvi. 16. †

From

(2) † My sentiment concerning *election*, is thus expressed by a great Calvinist minister. " In the written word a decree of God is found, which shews who are the chosen and the saved people ; *He that*
believeth

✱ From thence the Apostle takes occasion to shew, that pardon and salvation are not, in whole or in part, attained by [the covenant of] works, but merely by [the covenant of] grace. *A remnant* of those self-righteous pharisees *is saved*, [not indeed by their self-righteousness,] but by the covenant of grace, [according to which we must equally part with our self-righteousness and our sins.] *And if by* [the covenant of] *grace*, then *it is no more* [by that] *of works*, whether of the ceremonial law [of Moses,] or of the moral law [of innocence perverted to pharisaic purposes;] *else* [the] *grace* [of Christ] *is no longer grace* [bestowed upon a criminal:] The very nature of [† gospel-]grace is lost. *And*
if

“believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. The chosen people therefore are a race of true believers, convinced by God’s spirit of their ruined estate, endowed with divine faith, by which they seek to Christ for help; and seeking do obtain pardon, peace, and holiness.” *The Christian World Unmasked*. Second Edit. p. 186. Judicious christians will probably agree here with this pious divine, if he does not deny: (1) That in the divine decree of election the word BELIEVETH, excludes from the election those who *have cast off their first faith*, or *have made shipwreck of the faith*: And (2) That the word IS BAPTIZED, implies *professing the faith in word and work*; or making, and standing to, the *baptismal* vow, which respects not only believing the articles of the christian faith, but also keeping God’s holy will and commandments.

(3) † I say *gospel-grace*, because it is that which the Apostle means. It may with propriety be distinguished from the *original grace* which Adam had before the fall, and which deists and pharisees still suppose themselves possessed of. Some people imagine, that if our first parents had well acquitted themselves in the trial of their faithfulness, their reward would *not* have been *of grace*; they would (strictly speaking) have *merited* heaven. But this is a mistake. From the Creator to the creature, all blessings are, and must for ever be *of grace*, of *mere* grace. Gabriel himself enjoys heaven thro’ *free grace*. Unless some gracious promise interposes, God may this instant put an end without injustice, not only to his glory, but to his very existence. Should you ask what difference there is, between *original* and *gospel* grace; I answer, that original, *Adamic* grace naturally flowed from God, as *Creator and Preserver*, to *innocent, happy* creatures. But *gospel* grace, that for which St. Paul so strenuously contends in my text, superna-
turally

if it be [by the covenant] *of works, then it is no more* [by gospel] *grace; else work is no longer* [the] *work* [of a sinless creature,] but the very nature of it is destroyed [according to the first covenant, which requires perfect conformity to the law in the work, and perfect innocence in the worker.]

As if the Apostle had said, There is something so absolutely inconsistent, between being saved by [the covenant of] grace, and being saved by [that of] works, that if you suppose either, you of necessity exclude the other: for what is given to works [upon the footing of the first covenant,] is [improperly speaking] the payment of a debt [which God, by his gracious promise, contracted with *innocent* mankind without the interposition of a Mediator:] whereas [gospel-] grace implies [not only] a favour [*strictly speaking* unmerited [by us; but also an atoning sacrifice on the Redeemer's part, and a damnable demerit on our own:] so that the same benefit cannot, in the very things, be derived from both [covenants.]

Having thus opened the context, I proceed to a more particular illustration of the text; and that I may explain it as fully, as the time allotted for this discourse will permit,

FIRST, I shall premise an account of the two covenants: The covenant of *works*, to which the pharisees of old trusted, and [most of] the Roman catholics, with many false protestants, still trust in our days: — and the covenant of *grace*, by which alone

2

turally flows from God, as *Redeemer* and *Comforter*, to *guilty, wretched* mankind: And here let us take notice of the opposition there is, between pharisaic and evangelical obedience, between *the works of the law* and *the works of faith*. The former are done with a *proud conceit* of the *natural strength*, which man lost by the fall; and the latter, with an *humble dependence* on divine mercy thro' the Redeemer's merits; and on the *supernatural power* bestowed upon lost mankind for his sake. When St. Paul decries the works of the law, it is merely to recommend the works of faith: and yet, O the dreadful effects of confusion! in Babel people suppose, that he pours equal contempt upon both.

a remnant was saved in St. Paul's time, and will be saved in all ages.

SECONDLY, I shall prove, that the way of salvation BY [obedient] FAITH ONLY, or, which is the same thing, BY THE COVENANT OF GRACE, is the ONLY WAY that leads to life, according to the scriptures and the articles of our church, to whose holy doctrine I shall publicly set my seal.

THIRDLY, I shall endeavour to show the unreasonableness and injustice of those, who accuse me of "preaching against good works" when I [decry pharisaic works, and] preach salvation thro' the covenant of grace only.

FOURTHLY and lastly, after having informed you, why [even] good works [truly so called] cannot † [properly] deserve salvation in whole or in part; I shall answer the old objection of [some ignorant] papists, [and pharisaical protestants:] "If good works cannot † [properly merit us heaven,] why should we do them? There is no need to trouble ourselves about any."

FIRST

(4) † I prefer *properly* to *absolutely*, the word which I formerly used; because *absolutely* bears too hard upon the second gospel axiom, and turns out of the gospel the *rewardable condescency*, that our *whole obedience*, even according to Dr. Owen, *hath unto eternal life, thro' God's gracious appointment*.

(5) † I say now *properly merit us heaven*, and not *save us, get us heaven, or procure us heaven*, expressions which occur a few times in my old sermon; because [taking the word *merit* in its true and proper sense] the phrase "*cannot merit us heaven*," leaves room to defend the necessity of evangelical obedience, and of the works of faith, by which we shall be saved, not indeed as being the first and properly meritorious cause of our salvation, (for to ascribe them that honour would be to injure free grace, and place them on the Mediator's throne) but as being the secondary instrumental cause of our justification in the great day, and consequently of our eternal salvation.

Nor does the expression *properly merit us heaven* clash with such scriptures as these — *When the wicked man turneth from his iniquity, he shall save his soul alive* — *Save some with fear* — *Save thy husband* — *Save thy wife* — *We are saved by hope* — *Work out your own salvation*. — *He that converteth a sinner shall save a soul from death* — *Thy faith hath saved thee* — *In doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee*.

FIRST PART.

I begin by laying before you an account of the two [grand] covenants, that God entered into with man. The first was made with Adam, when he was in a state of innocence in paradise. The condition of it, which is excessively hard, [nay, absolutely impossible] to fallen man, was easy before the fall. It runs thus :

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thee. A preacher should do justice to every part of the scripture. Nor should he blunt one edge of the sword of the spirit, under pretence of making the other sharper. This I inadvertently did some times in the year 1762. May God endue me with wisdom that I may not do it in 1774 ! I find it the nicest thing in practical, as well as in polemical divinity, so to defend the doctrine of God's *free grace* as not to wound that of man's *faithful obedience*, and vice versa. These two doctrines support the two gospel axioms, and may be called the *breasts* of the church. A child of God, instead of peevishly biting the one or the other, should suck them alternately : and a minister of Christ, instead of cutting off either, should carefully protect them both.

Should any one object, that if Calvinism is supported by the Rev. Mr. Berridge's distinction between *Ir* and *Ir* [see the fifth Check, 2d part :] the gospel-axioms, about which we make so much ado, have not a better foundation ; since they depend upon a distinction between *original merit* and *derived merit*. I reply, that the distinction between legal *Ir* and evangelical *Ir*, is unworthy of Christ, and not less contrary to scripture, than to reason, and morality. On the contrary, the distinction between *original* or proper merit, and *derived* or improper worthiness, far from being frivolous, is scriptural, [see IV Check, p. 65, &c.] solid, highly honourable to Christ, greatly conducive to morality, very rational, and lying within the reach of the meanest capacity.

This will appear from the following propositions, which contain the sum of our doctrine concerning merit.—(1) All *proper* worthiness, merit, or desert of any divine reward, is in Christ, the overflowing fountain of all original excellence.—(2) If any of the living water of that rich spring is received by faith, and flows thro' the believer's heart and works, it forms *improper* worthiness, or *derived* merit ; because, *properly speaking*, it is Christ's merit still.—(3) *Original* merit answers to the *first* gospel axiom, and *derived* worthiness to the *second*. (4) According to the first covenant we can never merit a reward, because, of ourselves as sinners, we deserve nothing but hell ; and that covenant makes no provision of merit for hell-deserving sinners.—But (5) according to the second covenant, by God's gracious appointment and merciful promise, we can, *improperly speaking*, be worthy of heaven, thro' the blood of Christ sprinkled upon our hearts, and thro' his righteousness derived to us and to our works by faith.—(6) Hence

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Do this [thou sinless man] and live: The [innocent] man that does these things, shall live by them, Rom. x. 5. That is, "If thou [who art now a guiltless, holy and "perfect creature] yieldest a constant, universal, and "perfect obedience to the moral law," now summed up

it is, that God will give some, namely impenitent murderers, blood to drink, *for they are worthy*, they PROPERLY deserve it; while others, namely, penitent believers, shall walk with Christ in white, *for they are worthy*, they IMPROPERLY merit it. Rev. xvi. 6. and iii. 4.

An illustration taken from a leaden pipe full of water, may show how it is possible, that *unworthy* man should become *worthy*, thro' the righteousness which Christ supplies believers with. Strictly speaking, water does not belong to a pipe, any more than merit or worthiness to a believer: for a pipe is only a number of dry sheets of lead soldered together: But if that *dry*, leaden pipe really receives some of the water, which a river supplies; I make myself ridiculous by asserting, that the man who hints, there is water in the pipe, confounds the elements, seeks to dry up the river, and is guilty of a dreadful philosophical heresy.

However, if our prepossessed brethren feel an invincible aversion to our Lord's word [*αξιος*] *meriting*, we are willing to become all things to them for his sake. If it may be a means of restoring tranquillity to their minds, we cheerfully consent to use only the word of our translators *worthy*; and here I give full leave to my readers, whenever they meet the noun *merit* or the verb *to merit* in my Checks, to read *worthiness* instead of the one, and *to be worthy* instead of the other. It may indeed puzzle unbiassed persons to find a difference between those expressions; but no matter. If others will expose their prejudice, we ought not only to maintain the truth, but to show our condescension. The word *Merit* is absolutely nothing to Mr. Wesley and me; but the doctrine of faithful obedience in Christ, and of the gracious rewards with which it shall be crowned for his sake, contains all our duty on earth, and draws after it all our bliss in heaven. Therefore, only grant us *truly* the second gospel-axiom: — grant us, that God has not appointed his creatures to endless punishments and heavenly rewards out of mere caprice: — grant us, that, while the wicked shall PROPERLY and LEGALLY DESERVE their own (and not Adam's) place in hell, the righteous shall *improperly* and *evangelically* BE WORTHY TO OBTAIN THAT WORLD, where they *shall be equal to the angels*, Luke xx. 35: — grant us that man is in a state of probation, and shall be recompensed *for*, and *according to what he has done in the body*, whether it be good or bad: — In a word, grant us the capital doctrine of a day of retribution, in which God shall judge the world in wisdom and righteousness, not in solemn folly or satanical hypocrisy; and we ask no more. — This note is a key to all the doctrines, which we maintain in the Minutes, and explain in the Checks,

up in the ten commandments, "thou shalt be rewarded with glory and heaven. But if thou failest in any one particular, whether it be in thought, word, or deed, *thou shalt surely die*, Gen. ii. 17, for *the soul that sinneth it shall die*, Ez. xviii. 4. *The wages of sin is death*, Rom. vi. 23. And *cursted is every one, that continueth not in ALL things, written in the book of the law to do them*," Gal. iii. 10.

Nor does this covenant make any allowance for deficiencies, or pass by one transgression great or little, without pronouncing the threatened curse; [for it made no provision for repentance, neither did it offer sinners the help of a sacrificing priest, or interceding mediator.] Whether therefore the sin be murder and adultery, or only eating some forbidden fruit, its language is, † *Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*, James ii. 10. That is, All the curses denounced against those, who break the covenant of works, hang upon his guilty head, [and will fall upon him in a degree proportionable to the aggravations of his sin.]

This first covenant we have all broken in our first parents, for [*in Adam all die*] — *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*, Rom. v. 12. We are then all born [*or conceived*] *in sin*; Psalm li. 5; and consequently *we are by nature children of wrath*, Eph. ii. 3. But this is not all: this root of original sin, produces in every man many actual iniquities, whereby, as we imitate Adam's rebellion, so we make the guilt of it our own, and fasten the curse attending that guilt upon our own souls. Rom. vii. 24.

Therefore, while we remain in our natural state, [or, to speak more intelligibly, while we continue in
fin,

(6) † Whoever reads the scriptures without prejudice, will be of Mr. Burgess's mind concerning this awful text. [see IVth Check, p. 42.] It was evidently spoken with reference to *Christ's law of liberty*, as well as some of the passages quoted in the preceding paragraph: and if they guard even *that law*; how much more the law of innocence, which, tho' it cannot be holier in its precepts, is yet much more peremptory in its curses!

fin, guilt, and *total* impenitency ; we not only trample the covenant of grace under foot, but] we stand upon the [broken] covenant of works ; and consequently lie under the dreadful curse, which is already denounced against every transgressor of the law, Gal. 3, 10, [as well as against every despiser of the gospel, Heb. x. 27.]

Hence it is that, *by the deeds of the law*, i. e. by the [unsprinkled] good works commanded in the law [of innocence ; or by the ceremonies prescribed in the law of Moses,] *shall no flesh living* [no sinner] *be justified* : for as many as are of the works of the law, [as it stands opposed to the gospel ; yea, as many also as rest, like the impenitent pharisees, in the letter of the Mosaic law,] *are under the curse* ; the scripture having concluded all under sin, [i. e. testified that all are sinners by conception and practice] and consequently under the curse [of the first covenant,] *that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty* [i. e. may humbly confess their fallen and lost estate] *before God*, [and gladly accept his offers of mercy in the second covenant.] Rom. 3, 19, 20.

* In this deplorable state of guilt and danger, we [generally] remain careless and insensible, [when we have once taken to the ways of vanity] ☞ making what we call “ *the mercy of God* ” a pack-horse [if I may use so coarse an expression] to carry us and our sins to heaven, upon the *filthy rags* † of our own [pharisaic] righteousness. ☞ Here we continue, till divine grace awakens us, by the preaching of the gospel, or by some other means. Eph. v. 14. Being then roused to a serious consideration of our fallen state in Adam, and to a sensibility of the curse which we lie under, thro’ our numerous breaches of [the second, as well as of] the first covenant ; after many fruitless attempts to remove that curse, by fulfilling the law [of innocence ;] after many [faithless] endeavours to save ourselves by our own [anti-evangelical] works, and righteousness, ☞ we despair at last of getting to heaven,
E ven,

(7) † Here that expression is used in the scriptural sense.

ven, by building a babel with the *untempered mortar* of our own [fancied] sincerity, and the bricks of our wretched good works, [or rather of our splendid sins.] ☞ And leaving the impassable road of the covenant of works, we begin to seek [as condemned criminals] the way, which God's free mercy has opened for *lost* sinners in Jesus Christ. Acts ii. 37. Phil. iii. 6. &c.

This *new and living way* [for I may call it by the name which the apostle emphatically gives to the last dispensation of the gospel] Heb. x. 19, 20, is the new covenant, the covenant of grace [in its various editions or dispensations. For, if the Christian edition is called *new* in opposition to the Jewish, all the editions together may well be] called *new*, in opposition to the old covenant, the covenant of works [made with Adam before the fall.] It is also termed *gospel*, that is, *glad tidings*, because [† with different degrees of evidence] it brings comfortable news of free salvation in Christ, to all that see they are undone in themselves.

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(8) † This, and the preceding clauses are added, to guard the doctrine of the gospel-dispensations, of which I had but very confused views eleven years ago. See third Check, p. 10, &c. Leaning then too much towards Calvinism, I fancied, at times at least, that the *gospel* was confined within the narrow channel of its last dispensation; which was as absurd as if I had conceived, that the swell of our rivers at high water, is *all* the ocean. But turning to my bible, and "reviewing the whole affair," I clearly see, that the Jewish and Christian gospel are not the *everlasting gospel*, but only two of its brightest dispensations. Should the reader ask me what I mean by the *everlasting gospel*, when I consider it in its full latitude: I answer, that I mean with St. Paul, *The riches of God's goodness, forbearance, and long suffering, leading men to repentance* for Christ's sake, who in all ages is the *Saviour of the world*. — Yea, and the severe strokes of his gracious providence *driving* them to it. I dare not insinuate, that Jonah, one of the most successful preachers in the world, was not a *gospel-preacher*, when he stirred up all the people of Niniveh to repentance, by the fear of impending destruction; and that St. John the divine was a stranger to true divinity, when he gave us the following account of the manner, in which a celestial Evangelist preached the everlasting gospel. *I saw an other angel having the EVERLASTING GOSPEL, to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred,*

† The second covenant then, or the gospel, is a dispensation of free grace and mercy [not only to little children, of whom is the kingdom of heaven, but also] to poor, lost, helpless sinners, who, seeing and feeling themselves condemned by the law [of innocence,] and utterly unable to obtain justification upon the terms of the FIRST covenant, come to [a merciful God thro'] Jesus Christ [*the light of men*, according to the helps afforded them in the dispensation, which they are under,] to seek in him [and from him those merits and] that righteousness, which they have not in themselves. For the Son of God, being both God and man in one person; and by the invaluable sacrifice of himself upon the cross, having suffered the punishment due to all our breaches of the law [of works;] and by his most holy life having answered all the demands of the † FIRST covenant, *God can be*
E 2 *just.*

hundred, and tongue, and people, [Here is free grace!] saying with a loud voice: Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment, as well as of his mercy, is come: and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. Here is, if I am not mistaken, the gospel according to which many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down at the heavenly feast with the Father of the faithful, when the unloving Pharisees shall be thrust out, notwithstanding their great ado about absolute election. This note will probably touch the apple of my reader's eye, if he is a rigid predestinarian. But if he is offended, I intreat him to consider, whether his love does not bear some resemblance to the charity of those strong predestinarians of old, those monopolizers of God's election, who despised poor sinners of the Gentiles. How violent was their prejudice! They vastly admired our Lord's sermon at Nazareth, till he touched the sore that festered in their strait-laced breast. But no sooner did he insinuate, that their election was not yet made sure, and that the poor Pagan widow of Sarepta, and Naaman the Syrian were not absolute reprobates; than they were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill, that they might cast him down headlong. He had touched their great Diana, and therefore, to be sure, he had committed the unpardonable sin; he had spoken treason, heresy, blasphemy. See Luke iv. 28.

(9) † Altho' there were some very unguarded passages in my original sermon, yet, what was unguarded in one place, was in a great degree guarded in another. Thus even in this paragraph, which is the first that Mr. Hill produces in his extract, by saying that *Christ*
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just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus, Rom. iii. 26. ☞ Therefore, if a sinner, *whose mouth is stopped, and who has nothing to pay,* pleads from the heart the atoning blood of Christ [and supposing he never heard that precious name, if according to his light he implores *divine mercy, for the free exercise of which Christ's blood has made way*] not only God will not deliver him to the tormentors, but will *frankly forgive him all.* Luke vii. 41, &c.

☞ Herein then consists the great difference, between the first and the second covenant. Under the first, an absolute, unfinning, universal obedience in our own persons is required; and such obedience we, [in our fallen state,] can never perform. — Under the second covenant, this obedience [to the law of innocence, payed by, and] in our surety Christ Jesus, when we are united to him by a faith of the operation of God, is accepted instead of our own. ☞ For as our sins were transferred upon the Redeemer's guiltless head, so his merits are brought home to our guilty souls

has answered all the demands of the FIRST covenant for believers, I indirectly assert, that he has not answered the demands of the second; and that according to the gospel, we must personally repent, believe and obey to be finally accepted: The covenant of grace insisting as much upon *the works of faith*, as the covenant of works did upon *the works of the law of innocence*, in order to our continuance and progress in the divine favour. A doctrine this which is the ground of the minutes, the quintessence of the Checks, and the downfall of antinomianism. It was only with respect to the covenant of works, and to the law of innocence, that I said in the next paragraph, transposed by Mr. Hill, "THIS obedience — when we are united to Christ by a faith of the operation of God, IS ACCEPTED INSTEAD OF OUR OWN." How greatly then does he mistake me, when he supposes I asserted that the personal, Adamic, and (in one sense) anti-evangelical obedience of Christ, which sprang neither from gospel-faith nor from gospel-repentance, *is accepted instead of the personal, penitential, evangelical obedience of believers!* It is just here that the Calvinists turn aside from the truth, to make void the law of Christ and follow antinomian dotages. Because Christ has fulfilled the Adamic law of innocence for us, they fancy that he has also fulfilled his own evangelical law of gospel-obedience, according to which we must stand or fall, when by our words we shall be justified, and by our works we shall be condemned.

souls by the powerful operation of divine grace thro' faith, and being thus *complete in Christ* † [with regard to the fulfilling of the FIRST covenant,] we can rejoice in God, who has made him unto us *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*. [I say, with regard to the fulfilling of the FIRST covenant, to guard against the error of thousands, who vainly imagine that Christ has fulfilled the terms of the *second* covenant for us, and talk of *finished salvation*, just as if our Lord had actually repented of our sins, believed in his own blood, and fulfilled his own evangelical law in our stead; a fatal error this, which makes christians law-

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less,

(10) † If I say that *penitent* believers are *complete in Christ* with respect to the *first* covenant; I do not intimate that *fallen* believers, who *crucify the Son of God afresh*, may even commit deliberate murder, and remain *complete in him*, or rather (as the original means also) *filled with him*. Far be the horrid insinuation from the pen and heart of a Christian. I readily grant, that true believers are not less dead to the Adamic law of innocence, than to the ceremonial law of Moses; and that, with respect to it, they heartily say as David, *Enter not into judgment with thy servants, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified*. But mistake me not; I would not insinuate, that they are *lawless*, or only under a *rule of life*, which they may break without endangering their salvation. No; they are *under the law of Christ, the law of liberty, the law of the spirit of life, the royal law of gospel-holiness*; and according to *this* law, they shall all be rewarded or punished in the day of judgment. Altho' this law admits of repentance after a fall, at least during the day of salvation; and altho' it does not condemn us, for not obeying above our present measure of power; yet it does not make the least allowance for wilful sin, any more than the Adamic law; for St. James informs a believer, that *if he offend in one point, he is guilty of all*. And indeed our Lord's parable confirms this awful declaration. The favoured servant, who had the immense debt of *ten thousand talents forgiven him*, sinned against Christ's law only *in one point*, namely, in refusing to have mercy on his fellow servant, as his Lord had had compassion upon him: and for that *one* offence he was delivered to the tormentors, as notoriously guilty of breaking the whole law of liberty and love. *If he who despised the law of Moses perished under two or three witnesses, of how MUCH SORER PUNISHMENT shall he be thought worthy, who despises the law of Christ*. This is the ground of the epistle to the Hebrews: but who considers it? Who believes, that the Son of God will command even the *unprofitable* servant to be cut asunder? *When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith upon the earth?* Lord! help my unbelief,

less, represents Christ as the minister of sin, and arms the antinomian fiend with a dreadful ax, to fell the trees of righteousness, and cut down the very pillars of the house of God.]

From what has been observed it follows, that before any one can believe [to salvation] in the gospel-sense of the word, he must be *convinced of sin* by the spirit of God, John xvi. 8. He must feel himself a guilty, lost, and helpless sinner, unable to recover the favour and image of God by his own strength and righteousness: Acts ii. 37, 38.

This conviction and sense of guilt make the sinner *come travelling and heavy laden to Christ*, earnestly claiming the *rest* which he offers to weary souls, Mat. xi. 28. This rest the mourner seeks with the contrite publican, in the constant use of all the means of grace; endeavouring to *bring forth fruit meet for repentance*, till the same spirit, that had convinced him of sin, and alarmed his drowsy conscience, *convinces him also of righteousness*, John xvi. 8, that is, shews him the all-sufficiency of the Saviour's [merits or] righteousness, to swallow up his [† former sins, and] unrighteousness; and the infinite value of Christ's meritorious death, to atone for his [† past] unholy life; enabling him to *believe with the heart*, and consequently to *feel* [under the christian dispensation] that he has an interest in the Redeemer's blood and righteousness; [or, that he is savingly interested in the merit of all that the Son of God suffered, did, and continues to do for us.]

This lively faith, this *faith † working by love*, is *that which is imputed for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 3, and that

(11) † Without the words *former* and *past*, the sentence leaned towards Antinomianism. It gave fallen believers room to conclude, that their *future* or *present* unholy lives were unconditionally atoned for; contrary to St. Paul's guarded gospel, *God has set forth Christ to be a propitiation, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins THAT ARE PAST*. Here is no pleasing innuendo, that the present, or future sins of laodicean backsliders, "are for ever and for ever cancelled."

(12) † This is the very doctrine of the *minutes* and of the *checks*. Is it not astonishing, that Mr. Hill should desire me to publish my *sermon*, as "*the best confutation*" of both!

that whereby a soul is born of God [according to the † christian dispensation of the gospel.] 1 John v. 1. By this faith the [christian] believer being [strongly] united to Christ, as a member to the body, becomes entitled to [a much larger share in] the benefit of all that our Lord did and suffered; and in consequence of this [strong] vital union with him, who is the source of all goodness, he derives a [degree of] power till then unknown, to do good works truly so called: as a graft, which is [strongly] united to the stock that bears it, draws from it new sap, and power to bring forth fruit in [greater] abundance.

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(13) † The judicious reader will easily perceive, that the additions made to this, and some other paragraphs of my old sermon, are intended to guard the inferior dispensations of the gospel. Are there not degrees of saving faith, inferior to the faith of the christian gospel? And are not those degrees of faith consistent with the most profound ignorance of the history of our Lord's sufferings, and consequently with any *explicit* knowledge of the atonement. Altho' mankind in general had some consciousness of guilt, and a confused idea of propitiatory sacrifices; and altho' all the Jewish sacrifices and prophecies pointed to the great atonement; yet how few, even among the pious Jews, seem to have had a clear belief that the Messiah would *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*! How unreasonable is it then to confine the gospel to the explicit knowledge of Christ's atoning sufferings, to which both the prophets and apostles were once such strangers! Does not St. Peter intimate that *the prophets searched, to little purpose, what the Spirit signified, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ*; since it was revealed to them, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things, which are now reported in the christian gospel? 1 Peter i. 11, 12. And how absurd is it to suppose, that nothing is gospel, but a doctrine, which the first preachers of the christian gospel knew little or nothing of. even while they preached the gospel under our Lord's immediate direction? Did not John the Baptist exceed in evangelical knowledge, *all that were born of women*? Were the Apostles much inferior to him, when they had been three years in Christ's school? Did not our Lord say to them, *Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for verily many prophets and righteous men have desired to see the things that ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that ye hear, and have not heard them*? Again, did he not testify, that in general they had justifying faith, i. e. faith working by love? Did he not say, *Now are ye clean thro' the word which I have spoken unto you — The Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me, and believed that I came forth from God?*

it [O thou, that professest the christian faith, especially,] *shew me thy faith by thy works*, says an Apostle : that is, shew me that thou art grafted in Christ [according to the christian dispensation] by serving God with all thy strength ; by doing all the good thou canst to the souls and bodies of men with chearfulness ; by suffering wrong and contempt with meekness ; by slighting earthly joys, mortifying fleshly lusts, having thy conversation in heaven, and panting every hour after a closer union with Christ, the life of all believers. If thou dost not bring forth these fruits, thou art not a Christian ; thou art not *in Christ a new creature*, 2 Cor. v. 17. Thou mayest talk of faith, and suppose that thou believest ; but give me leave to tell thee, that [unless thou art in the case of the Eunuch, who

God ? Nay, did he not send them two and two, to preach the gospel of the day : *The kingdom of heaven is at hand : Repent and believe THE GOSPEL* ? And would he have sent them to preach a gospel to which they were utter strangers ? But were they not perfectly strangers to what passies now for the *only* gospel ? Had they the least idea that their Master's blood was to be shed for them, even after he had said, *This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins* ? When he spoke to them of his sufferings, were not they so far from believing in the atonement which he was about to make, that they were offended at the very idea ? Is not this evident from the words of Peter, their chief speaker, who *began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord : This shall not happen unto thee* : i. e. We do not yet see the need of thy blood ? Nay, when Christ had actually shed it, and the atoning work was *finished* ; far from having the least notion about what is called "*finished* salvation," and "*gospel*" in our day ; did they not suppose that all their hopes were blasted, saying, *We trusted that it had been he, who should have redeemed Israel*, Luke xxiv. 21 ? Thus the very payment of their ransom, made them despair of redemption : So great was their unacquaintedness with the doctrine of the atonement, notwithstanding their gospel-knowledge, which far exceeded that of most patriarchs and prophets ! From these observations may I not conclude : (1) That an explicit knowledge of Christ's passion and atonement, is the prerogative of the *christian* gospel advancing towards perfection ? And (2) that those who make it essential to the *everlasting* gospel, most dreadfully curtail it, and indirectly doom to hell, not only all the righteous Jews, Turks, and Heathens, who may now be alive ; but also almost all the believers, who died before our Lord's crucifixion, and some of the disciples themselves after his resurrection ?

who searched the scriptures even upon a journey ; or of Cornelius, who sought the Lord in alms-givings, and prayer ;] if thou believest at all, [I fear] it is with the drunkard's faith, the whoremonger's faith, the devil's faith, James ii. 19. — From such a faith, may God deliver us, and give us, instead of this counterfeit, *the faith once delivered unto the saints, the mystery of faith kept in a pure conscience !* Get it, O sinner, who bearest a christian name, and Christ and heaven are thine : [but if thou] die without it, [whether it be by continuing in thy present sin and unbelief, or by *making shipwreck of the faith,*] thou diest the second death ; thou sinkest in the bottomless pit for evermore. Mark xvi. 16.

Having thus given you an account of both covenants, and laid before you the *condition* [or term] of each ; namely, for the *first*, a sinless, uninterrupted obedience to all the commands of the holy, spiritual, [and Adamic] law of God, performed by ourselves [without the least mediatorial assistance :] and for the *second*, a lively faith in Christ [*the light of the world,* according to the gospel-dispensation we are under ;] by which faith the virtue of Christ's active and passive obedience to the law [of innocence] being imputed to us, and applied to our hearts, we are made *new creatures, born again, and created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, without which there can be no lively faith [under any of the divine dispensations :] and having [by that important distinction of the two grand covenants] removed a great deal of rubbish out of the way ; I hope it will not be difficult to prove, under the

SECOND HEAD,

That the way of salvation by such a lively faith only, or, which is the same, by the covenant of grace [alone,] is the one way that leads to life, according to the bible and our articles of religion.

If you ask all the pharisees, all the self-righteous Heathens, Turks, Jews, and Papists in the world, which

which is the way of salvation? [with too many ignorant Protestants] they will answer, [without making the least mention of repentance and faith] "Thro' doing good works, and leading a good life:" That is, "Thro' the covenant of works;" flatly contrary to what I have proved in the first part of this discourse; namely, that *by the works of the law, by the first covenant, shall no flesh living be justified*, Gal. ii. 16. Or if they have yet some sense of modesty, if they are not quite lost in pride, [supposing them Christians] they will varnish over the blasphemy [which I fear is indirectly couched under their boasting speech,] with two or three words about God's mercy. "Why, say they, "it is to be hoped, we shall all be saved by endeavouring to lead good lives, and do good works: "And if that will not do, God's mercy in Christ will "do the rest." Which means neither more nor less than this: "We are still to be saved by the covenant "of works, by putting on, [sinful and guilty as we "are,] the robe of our own [pharisaic, anti-evangelical, Christless] righteousness; and if it happen to "be too short, or to have some holes, Christ [whom "we are willing to make the *omega*, but not the *alpha*; "the *last*, but not the *first*,] will in mercy tear his "spotless robe [of merits,] to patch up and lengthen "ours." [And this they say, it is to be feared, without the least degree of *genuine* repentance towards God, and *heart-felt* faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.]

1 + O how many dream of getting to heaven in this fool's coat, [this absurd dress of a christian Pharisee!] How many, by thus blending the two covenants, which are as incompatible as fire and water, try to make for themselves a third covenant, that never existed but in their proud imagination! In a word, how many are there, who say or think: We must be saved partly by [the covenant of] works, and partly by [the covenant of] grace! giving the lie to God and my text! overturning at once the gospel and protestantism! — No, no: if *a remnant is saved*, it is by the covenant of [gospel-]grace; and if by [gospel-]grace, then it is

no more [by the covenant] of works ; otherwise grace is no more [gospel-]grace. But if it be [by the covenant] of works, then it is no more [gospel-]grace ; otherwise work is no more [anti-evangelical] work : [for the moment obedience is *the work of faith*, it can no more be opposed to faith and gospel-grace, than the fruit of a tree can be opposed to the tree, and the sap by which it is produced.]

But, *to the law and the testimony !* Do the oracles of God, or the writings of our Reformers, direct us for salvation to the covenant of works, or to a third covenant of [anti-evangelical +] works and [evangelical] grace patched up together ? Do they not entirely and invariably point us to the covenant of grace alone ?

Hear first the word of the Lord. *He that BELIEVETH on the Son* [according to the light of the dispensation he is under] *hath everlasting life : He that BELIEVETH NOT, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,* John iii. 36. — When the trembling jailer cries out, *What must I do to be saved ?* Paul and Silas answer, *BELIEVE in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,* Acts xvi. 31. — *God so loved the world,* says St. John, *that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever BELIEVETH in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* John iii. 16. — *By GRACE,* says St. Paul, *ye are [initially] saved thro' FAITH, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God ; not [by the covenant] of works, [nor yet by the proper merit of any works,] lest any man should boast [as the Pharisee ;*
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(14) † I add the word *anti-evangelical*, to point out the rise of the mistake of some pious protestants, who, being carried away by an injudicious zeal for the first gospel-axiom, and misled by the conciseness of the Apostle's style, get upon the pinnacle of the antinomian babel, and thence decry *all* works in general ; unhappily quoting St. Paul in confirmation of their error. Although it is evident, that the Apostle never excluded from the gospel-plan of salvation by grace, any works but the *works of unbelief*, and sometimes pleaded for the *works of faith*, and for the immense rewards, with which they shall be crowned, in far stronger terms than St. James himself ; denouncing *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon EVERY SOUL of man that neglects them, or doth evil.* Rom. ii.

all who despise the way of faith, and put the instrumental causes in the room of the first and *properly* meritorious cause of our salvation, being no better than boasting Pharisees.] For *to him that worketh* [without applying to the throne of grace, as an hell-deserving sinner] *is the reward not reckoned of* [evangelical] *grace, but of* [legal] *debt: but to him, that worketh not* [upon the footing of the first covenant;] to him, who sees that he cannot [escape hell, much less] get heaven, by [setting] his good works, [if he has any, on the Redeemer's throne;] *but believeth* [as a lost sinner,] *on him that justifieth the ungodly; his FAITH is counted for righteousness: he is saved by* [obedient] *FAITH, which is the CONDITION of the covenant of grace,* Rom. iv. 4.

Thus speak the Scriptures, and, blessed be God! thus speak also our liturgy and articles.

In the *absolution* the priest declares, that [in the day of conversion] *God pardoneth and absolveth*, that is, saveth,  not those [moralists] who [being ashamed to repent, and scorning to believe the gospel, endeavour to] lead a good life to get a pardon [by their own merits:]  *but all those, who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel; that is, all those, who, by true repentance renounce* [together with their sins] *all dependance upon the covenant of works; and by a faith unfeigned fly for refuge only to* [God's mercy in Christ, which is so kindly offered to sinners in] *the covenant of grace. Hence it is that in the communion-service, we are commanded to pray That, by the merits and death of Christ, and thro' faith in his blood, we and all the whole church, may obtain remission of sins, and all other benefits of his passion.*

This holy doctrine is most clearly contained, and strongly established in the ixth, xth, xith, xiith, and xiiith of our articles of religion. And upon these five pillars, it will remain unshaken, as long as the church of England shall stand.

The ixth shews, that since the fall of Adam, "*the corruption of our nature deserves God's wrath and damnation;*"

nation;" so that [being considered without the free gift, that came upon all men in Christ unto justification of life, Rom. v. 18.] we are, of ourselves, evil trees ready for the axe of death, and the fire of hell.

The xth adds, that we cannot consequently get grace and glory, that is, save ourselves, by bearing good fruit [thro' our original powers, according to the first covenant] because an evil tree can only produce evil fruit: — [And, that "*we have no power to do works acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us,*" according to the second covenant.]

The xith affirms, that we are saved, that is, accepted of God, changed, and made good trees, trees of the Lord's planting, *only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works and deservings*: ☞ as we can do no good works, before we are [at least] in a state of [initial] salvation, ☞ *Make the tree [in some measure] good, says our Lord, and its fruit shall [in some degree] be good.* [In our infancy we are freely blessed with a seed of light from *Christ, the light of men*; and at the same time, we are freely justified from the damning guilt of original corruption. As we grow up, and personally repent and *believe in the light* after a personal fall, we are again freely pardoned. Thus, so long at least as *the accepted time, and the day of salvation* last,] God has first [in some degree] respect to our persons in Christ, and then to our sacrifices or works [of faith.] Heb. xi. 4. Gen. iv. 4, 5.

The xiith declares, that good works, works which necessarily follow [at least the] free justification [of infants,] do not serve to *put away* [or atone for] *sin*; but to declare the truth of our faith; "*inasmuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by the fruit.*" A tree is first planted, and then it brings forth fruit: ☞ A believer is first saved, [i. e. freely made partaker of initial salvation] and then he does good works. ☞ [A lively faith necessarily produces them, tho' a believer does not necessa-

rily persevere in a lively faith :] If he does them not, his faith is dead ; it is not [*now* a living and] saving faith ; he is no [longer an obedient] believer ; [but an antinomian or an apostate, a Demas or a Judas.]

The xiiiith insists upon that point of doctrine, which confounds the Pharisees in all ages, and lays our virtuous pride in the dust before God : Namely, that, [when we have sinned away the justification † of infants] *works done before* [that] *justification* [is restored,] *before faith* alone has put us [again] into a state of [initial] salvation, not only *do not fit us to receive grace*, but *have in themselves the nature of sin*, [nay of the worst of sins, spiritual pride, and pharisaic hypocrisy :] and consequently deserve death, the wages of sin, so far [are they] from meriting grace and glory. 

This is agreeable to reason as well as to scripture ; for if, *of ourselves*, as says our Church, [i. e. before any degree of grace is intilled into our infant-hearts,

or

(15) † Those who start at every expression they are not used to, will ask if our Church admits the justification of infants. I answer : Undoubtedly, since her clergy by her direction say over myriads of infants, “ *We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it has pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy holy Spirit, to receive him for thy own child, &c.* And in her catechism she teaches all children to say, as soon as they can speak, *I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation.* If my objector urges, that our Church puts those words only in the mouth of baptized children ; I reply : True, because she instructs no others. But why does she admit to baptism *all* the children that are born within her pale ? Does she not vindicate her practice in this respect, by an appeal to our Lord’s kind command : “ *Let little children come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven ?* ” This I had not considered, when I said in my *Appeal*, p. 186, that our Church returns thanks for the regeneration of baptized infants *only* [I should have said *chiefly*] upon a charitable supposition, &c. For it is evident that she does it also upon Christ’s gracious declaration, Mark x. 13, &c. the precious gospel of her office, upon which she comments in a manner most favourable to children ; concluding her charge on the occasion by these words ; *Wherefore, we being thus persuaded of the GOOD WILL of our heavenly Father towards this* [unbaptized] *infant, declared by his Son Jesus Christ, and nothing doubting, &c.* These words I had not attended to, when I wrote my *Appeal*. I take this first opportunity of acknowledging my mistake, which shall be rectified in the next edition.

or before God freely visits us again when we have personally fallen away from him,] *we cannot by our good works [so called] prepare ourselves to faith: If we are such crab trees, as can bring forth no apples, [without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will, it is plain that] by producing as many crabs, [i. e. as many works of unbelief] as [blaspheming] Paul before his conversion; and of as fine a colour, and as large a size, as those which the self-righteous Pharisee bore; we cannot change our own nature, nor force from ourselves the sweet fruit of one [truly] good work: 'Many who have not the 'true faith,' says our Church, yet flourish in works of mercy. But they that shine in good works [so called] without faith, are like dead men, who have goodly and precious tombs: Or, to carry on the allegory of our Reformers, the fine crabs which such people produce, please the eye of the spectator, who thinks them good apples; but God, who sees their hearts, tastes in the deceitful fruit nothing but the sourness of a crab. Such crabs are the alms of whoremongers, the prayers of unjust persons, the public worship of swearers and drunkards, the tithes and fasts † of Pharisees. Isa. i. 11, &c.*

☞ Having thus shewn you, how self-righteous, unawakened sinners dream of salvation, either by the covenant of works, or by a third imaginary covenant, in which two incompatible things [pharisaical] works and [evangelical] grace, [antichristian] merits and mercy [in Christ] are jumbled together; and having proved by plain, unanswerable passages, and by the 39 articles, that the gospel and our Church shew us, salvation cannot be attained, but under the second covenant, that is, *by [obedient] faith only*, and not by

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(16) † Here is a short enumeration of the good works, so called, which I decry in this sermon. Had my opponent considered it, he would never have supposed, that my discourse is "the best refutation" of what I have advanced in the Checks, in favour of the good works maintained by St. James and Mr. Wesley.

[the covenant of] works ; I beg leave to recapitulate the whole in three articles, which contain the sum of the gospel, and of the doctrine that I have constantly preached among you, and am determined to preach, God being my helper, till my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, † [unless a flaw can be found] in any of them, by the word of God or the articles of our Church. 

 Upon the proofs before advanced, I solemnly declare and publicly affirm : (1.) That there is no salvation to be attained by [the covenant of] works since the fall. The best man having broken an hundred times the first covenant, deserves an hundred times damnation by his works, and can no more be saved from hell by his obedience to God's law [of innocence] than a thief can be saved from the gallows, by the civil law which condemns him to be hanged.

(2.) [Respecting the primary and properly meritorious cause of our salvation, from first to last] *we are saved, as it is written in our eleventh article, only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our works or deservings : And, that [in the day of conversion] we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort : Yea the only doctrine that can melt down the heart of sinners, and make them constantly zealous of all sorts of good works, [if it is not made to supersede the justification of believers by the evidence of works, both in the day of trial and in the day of judgment : A doctrine this, which few antinomians are daring enough directly to oppose.]*

(3.) As

(17) † The words enclosed in brackets are in my manuscript, and were written several years ago, when, looking over my sermon, I thought they favoured more of christian modesty than those, which Mr. Hill has in his copy : *[And here I give a public challenge to any man living to find a flaw]* I challenge no body now, but I promise, that if any man living will be kind enough, to shew me my errors by plain scripture, and solid argument, he shall have my sincere thanks. For if I know my heart, pure and unmixt truth is the object of my desires, and controversial pursuits.

(3.) As all mankind are condemned by the covenant of works, *he that believeth not* [in the light of his dispensation] *being condemned already* : and as by the covenant of grace, there is no salvation to be had but in Christ thro' faith : so there is no mixing those two covenants without renouncing Christ and his gospel. He that stands with one foot upon the covenant of works, and with the other foot upon the covenant of grace ; [he that talks of divine mercy, while his heart continues as regardless of it as if he were sinless ; he that ends his prayers by the name of Christ, while he remains unconcerned about his fallen state,] is in the most eminent danger of eternal ruin. He that says, "I will do first what I can to merit heaven, " I will do my best ; and Christ, I hope, will do the rest ; and God, I trust, will have mercy upon me," is yet without [a known] God, and without [an applied] Christ in the world : he knows neither the nature of God's law, nor that of Christ's gospel.

[This is, my dear hearers, the substance of the *three articles*, which, eleven years ago I publicly laid down in this Church, as the ground of the doctrine which I had preached, and was determined still to preach among you. And I solemnly declare, that, to this day, I have not seen the least cause to *reject* any one of them as erroneous : Tho' I must confess, that I have found abundant reason particularly to *guard* the second, against the daring attacks, that antinomians in principle, or in practice, make upon St. James's undefiled religion. To return :]

We are undoubtedly obliged to do what we can, and to use the means of grace at all [proper] times and in all [convenient] places ; but, to rest in those means [like the Pharisees ;] to suppose that they will save us ; and, upon this supposition, to be easy without the experience of [converting] grace in our hearts, is very absurd. It is a mistake as foolish as that of the man, who supposes that his garden will be the more fruitful for pipes, which convey no water ; or that his body can be refreshed by empty cups.

The language of a penitent sinner is, " Lord, I pray, and hear [thy word ;] I fast, and receive [the commemorative tokens of thy passion ;] I give alms, and keep the sabbath ; but after all, *I am an unprofitable servant.* — [I must *work out my own salvation with fear and trembling*, and yet] *without thee I can do nothing* ; I cannot change my heart ; I cannot root up from my breast the desire of praise, the thirst of pleasure, and the hankering after gold, vanity, beauty, or sensual gratifications which I continually feel : — [Without thee] I cannot force my stubborn heart to repent, believe, and love ; to be meek and lowly, calm and devout. Lord deliver me from this body of death ; *Lord, save or I perish.*"

Christ will have all the glory [worthy of him] or none. We must be † wholly saved by him, or lost for ever : [for altho' we must be *co-workers with him*, by walking religiously in good works ; and if we are not, we shall have our portion with the *workers of iniquity* ; yet it is *he* that *worketh in us*, as in moral agents, *both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* It is he that appoints, and blesses all the inferior means of our salvation, therefore all the glory properly and originally belongs to him alone.]

[All our pardons flow down to us, in the streams of his precious blood. All our life, light, and power, are nothing but emanations from him, who is *the fountain of life, the sun of righteousness, the wisdom and power of God*, and in a word, *Jehovah our righteousness.* All that *gracious rewardableness* of the works of faith, all that *aptitude* of our sprinkled obedience unto eternal life, all that *being worthy*, which he himself condescends to speak of, Rev. iii. 4, and Luke xx. 35, spring not only *from his gracious appointment*, but from his overflowing merits. A comparison will illustrate my meaning.]

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(18) † See the first note upon the word *merely*. — N. B. Here begins the greatest addition to my old sermon. It is in favour of *free grace*, and runs thro' fourteen paragraphs.

[You see the chearful light that flows in upon us thro' those windows, and renders the glass as bright as this spring day. You know, that this brightness *in* the glass is not *from* the glass, which was totally dark some hours ago; a fit emblem THEN of *the works of darkness*, the works of unbelief: such works being as much devoid of rewardableness, as those panes were of light at midnight. Let us not forget then, that if our works are graciously rewarded, it is only when they are the works of *faith*, whose peculiar property it is *freely* to admit the merits of Christ, and the beams of the *sun of righteousness*; just as it is the property of the transparent matter, which composes these windows, *necessarily* to admit the genial warmth and chearful rays of the natural sun.]

[If I admire a poor widow, gladly casting her last mite into the treasury; or a martyr, generously giving his body to blood-thirsty executioners; it is only because their lively faith receives, and their pure charity reflects the light of him, who, for our sake, became poor; and for our sake joyfully surrendered to his bloody murderers. But altho' this image of our Lord's meritorious holiness and sufferings, does great honour to the saints who reflect it; yet, the praise of it originally and properly belongs to him alone.]

[An illustration will make you sensible of it. You have seen a glass perfectly reflecting the beauty of a person placed over against it, you have admired the elegant proportion of features, which composed her beauty: but did you ever see any man so void of good sense, as to suppose, that the beauty was *originally* in the glass which reflected it; or that the lovely appearance existed without depending on its original; or that it robbed the living beauty of her peculiar glory? And shall any, on the one hand, be so full of voluntary humility, as to maintain, that Christ is dishonoured by the *derived worthiness* of the works of *faith*, whose office it is to receive, embrace, and trust in the Redeemer's *original* and *proper* merit? Shall any, on the other hand, be so full of pharisaic pride

pride as to fancy, that the distinguishing excellence of our good works, if we have any, springs from, or terminates in ourselves? No, my brethren: As rivers flow back to the sea, and lose themselves in that immense reservoir of waters, whence they had their origin; so let all the "rewardable condescency" † of our evangelical obedience flow back to, and lose itself in the boundless, and bottomless ocean of our Lord's *original and proper merits.*]

[He, He alone is worthy—*properly* worthy! Worthy, —supremely *worthy is the Lamb that was slain!* Let us then always say, with the humble men of old, *Our goods are nothing unto thee*, our good works cannot possibly benefit thee. *What have we*, great God, *that we have not received* from thy gracious hand? And shall we keep back part of thy incontestable property, and impiously wear thy robes of praise! Far be the spiritual sacrilege from every pious breast! As *thine is all the kingdom and power*; so *thine be all the glory for ever and ever!*]

[If therefore, my brethren, we have the honour of *filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh, for his body's sake, which is the Church*; — *If we are even offered upon the sacrifice of each other's faith*; let us dread as blasphemy the wild thought of completing, and perfecting our Lord's infinitely complete, and perfect atonement. As God, who is infinite in himself, was not made greater by the immense bulk of created worlds; nor brighter by the shining perfections of countless myriads of angels and suns: So the infinite value of that *one offering, by which Christ has for ever perfected in atoning merits them that are sanctified*, is not augmented by the works of all the saints, and the blood of all the martyrs.
And

(19) † I need not inform my judicious readers, that I use the uncouth, barbarian expression of Dr. Owen, "rewardable condescency," to convey the meaning of our Lord, when he graciously speaks of *our meriting or being worthy*. If sick persons will not take a draught but out of a certain cup, made in the height of a queer fashion, we must please them for their good.

And as the heat of the fire adds nothing to the nature of the fire, or the beams of the sun to the sun : so the righteousness of the saints does not encrease that of Christ, nor adds their holiness any thing to his personal excellence.]

[Keep we then at an awful distance from the gulph, which self-righteous Pharisees set between themselves, and the justifier of those, who, like the contrite publican, are sensible of their ungodliness. With indignation rise we against the delusion of the Romanists, who countenance the absurd and impious doctrine of *indulgences*, by the worse than pharisaic doctrine of their *works of supererogation*. Let us not only receive, and defend in a scriptural manner, the important articles of our Church, which I have already mentioned ; but with undaunted courage before men, and with penitential contrition before God, let us stand to our xivth article, which teaches us, after our Lord, to say before the throne of inflexible justice, resplendent holiness, and dazzling glory, *We are unprofitable servants, even when we have done all that is commanded us*. In point of *strict equivalence* our best works of faith, our holiest duties, cannot *properly* merit the least heavenly reward. But, O ! may the humbling truth keep us for ever in the dust ! in point of *strict justice* our every bad work *properly* deserves infernal torments.]

[Therefore, while we earnestly contend for practical, pure, undefiled religion, take we the greatest care, not to obscure the *genuine* doctrines of grace. With meekness let us maintain unto blood, the honour of our Saviour's merits, against the hypocritical sons of virtuous pride, who cast the destructive veil of unbelief over the invaluable sacrifice of his body. And in our little sphere, let every one of us testify with the beloved disciple, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, in whom he is well pleased with us ; and for whose sake he works in us to repent, believe, and obey ; when we yield to the drawings of his grace, and concur with his spirit in the work of our salvation.*]

[Thro'

+ [Thro' that dear Redeemer then, we receive all the favours, which the Father of mercies bestows upon us. Are our hearts softened? It is thro' the influence of his preventing grace. Are our sins blotted out? It is through the sprinkling of his atoning blood. Are our souls renewed? It is by the communication of his powerful righteousness. Are we numbered among God's adopted children, and made partakers of his loving spirit? It is thro' a faith that receives him as the *light of the world*, and the *life of men*.

[The very graces, which the Spirit works in us; and the fruits of holiness, which those graces produce in our hearts and lives; are accepted only for Christ's sake. It is he, who presents them to God, sprinkled with his precious blood, and perfumed with his meritorious intercession. Nor are the defects of our holiest things, any other way atoned for, than by the full perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, which he made upon the cross for the sins of the whole world.]

[For Christ's sake God has annexed certain rewards of grace and glory, to the works of faith which Christ's spirit excites us to; and, I repeat it, for the sake of Christ only, we receive the rewards promised to humble, evangelical, sprinkled obedience. All christian believers say, *Not we, but the grace of God in Christ*: So far as their tempers and actions have been good, they cry out, *I'bow hast wrought all our works in us*. They all shout, *Christ for us*, and *Christ in us*, the *hope of glory*. They all ascribe *salvation to the Lamb*; and while they *cast their crowns of righteousness* and glory at his feet, they join in the grand chorus of the Church: *To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever*. Thus all is Christ; nothing without, nothing besides him. In a word, he is to believers, as the Apostle justly calls him, *ALL IN ALL*.]

[Indeed in maintaining the doctrine of *free grace*, I cannot but go even farther than our mistaken brethren,

thren, who suppose themselves the only advocates for it. They must forgive me, if I cannot be of their sentiment, when they insinuate, that they shall *absolutely* and *necessarily* be saved. For as reason dictates, that *absolute necessity* vanishes before *free grace*; so Christ charges his dearest elect to *fear God* as a righteous judge, who *CAN cast body and soul into hell*; yea, who can do it *justly*. No gracious promise therefore is made them, whose fulfilment, in heaven as well as upon earth, is not all of *grace* as well as of *truth*, and all thro' the merits of Christ.]

* [O ye *precious merits* of my Saviour, and thou *free grace* of my God! I, for one, shall want you, as long as the sun or moon endureth. Nay, when those luminaries shall cease to shine, I shall wrap myself in you; my transported soul shall grasp you; my insatiate spirit shall plunge into your unfathomable depths; and while I shall run the never-ending circle of my blessed existence, my overflowing bliss shall spring from you; my grateful heart shall leap thro' your impulse, my exulting tongue shall shout your praise, and I shall strike my golden harp to your eternal honour.]

[Nay, this very day, I publicly set my seal again to the important truths contained in the following scriptures:] *There is no other name* [no other deserving person] *under heaven, given to men whereby we may* [PROPERLY] *be saved* in whole or in part, but only the name [or person] of JESUS CHRIST. *He trod the wine-press of God's wrath alone, and of the people there was none with him. He alone is a Saviour, and there is none besides him.* [If he that converts a sinner, is said to *save a soul from death*, it is because he has the honor of being the Saviour's agent, and not because he is the "ORIGINAL CAUSE" of any man's salvation.]

☞ Wo then to those, who teach sinners the double way, the pharisaic way, the † [self-righteous] way of salvation,

(20) † Eleven years ago I said *the popish way*: I drop the expression now as favouring of protestant-bigotry. Tho' the papists lean in general to that extreme, yet many of them have known and taught the way of salvation by a faith that interests us in the Redeemer's merits;

salvation, partly by man's [antichristian] merits [according to the first covenant,] and partly by the [proper] merits of Jesus Christ [according to the second.] *If we, or an angel from heaven, says St. Paul, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached, namely, that we are saved [i. e. pardoned, absolved, and sanctified] by grace, thro' faith [which worketh by love] and that not of ourselves, [not without an atoning priest and the Spirit helping our infirmities] not [by the covenant] of works: it is the [gospel-]gift of God—let him be accursed, Gal. i. 8.]* ☞

☞ He really denies his Saviour, and tears the seamless robe of Christ's righteousness, who patches it with the rags of his own [anti-evangelical, faithless] righteousness, [Or, to speak without metaphor, he denies our Lord's meritorious fulfilling of the law of innocence, he despises the Saviour's complete observance of the Adamic law of works, who being forgetful of his aggravated guilt, and regardless of his palpable impotence, refuses to submit to the law of faith, and to embrace the covenant of grace with an ardor becoming a poor, self-condemned, lost, and undone sinner. Nay, I go farther still:] he takes away [or obstructs] all the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood, who pretends to mend it by adding thereto the filthy drops of his own [anti-evangelical, pharisaic] goodness, [in order to make a more complete satisfaction to divine justice.]

It is mere blasphemy against divine mercy, says our Church, and great derogation to the blood-shedding of our Saviour, to suppose that our works can DESERVE, or PURCHASE to us remission of sins; and consequently salvation. No: it is bestowed on BELIEVERS of the free grace and mercy of God, by the mediation of the blood of his

merits; many have discovered and attacked self-righteousness in its most deceitful appearances. Many have lived and died in the most profound humility. I would no more be a bitter protestant, damning all the papists in a lump; than a bitter papist, anathematizing all protestants without exception.

his son Jesus Christ, without merit or deserving on their part, [altho' not without the evangelical worthiness, which their faith derives from that dear Redeemer.]
Hom. on Fasting.

To conclude : By the covenant of works man has all the glory of his own salvation. Faith [in a Redeemer] is made of no effect ; Christ is entirely set aside, and works are placed in the Mediator's throne. — According to the imaginary, mixt covenant of salvation by our own good works [so called, or to speak with propriety, by our own faithless, hypocritical works] mended, [as we think,] with [some unscriptural notions and expressions about] Christ's merits ; man has the FIRST share of the glory ; Christ has only man's leavings ; [the Redeemer is allowed to be the *last* but not the *first* ; the *omega* but not the *alpha* : The two covenants are confounded ;] works and faith [or rather, faithless works and faith, graceless works and grace] contrary to my text, and indeed to common sense, come in together for a part of the honour [as if they were the primary meritorious cause of our salvation : whereas the good works of faith themselves are at best only the secondary, evidencing cause of our final salvation. †]

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But

(21) † Should a prejudiced Reader charge me with having mixed the two covenants in my Checks in opposition to the doctrine of this discourse ; Should he say, that I have taught the double way of works and faith i. e. of *faithless works* and *faith*, I protest against the groundless assertion, and appeal to all my candid Readers, whether I have not constantly pointed out the one gospel-way to heaven, the good old way of FAITH, *which WORKETH by love*. An unfeigned faith in Christ, according to the light of our dispensation, a faith shewn by evangelical works, is the scriptural condition of the covenant of grace, which I have all along insisted upon ; whereas anti-evangelical works, helped out by a feigned faith, are the imaginary condition of the mixt, fantastic covenant, against which I so justly bore my testimony eleven years ago, and against which I bear it now, fully designing so to do, “ God being my helper, till my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.”

As some persons thro' the force of prejudice, and others thro' some natural defect in their understanding, cannot see any difference between *the way of faith working by obedient love*, which I point out in the Checks ;

But by the gospel all is set in a most beautiful order, and exquisite harmony. The merits and sufferings of Christ, the Redeemer of the world, are the only *meritorious*, [or as says our Church, "*original*"] *cause*" of our salvation. The glory is entirely ascribed to him; and he alone sits upon the throne as a Saviour; while proud man has his mouth stopped, or opens it only in the dust to extol redeeming love. Faith, whose office it is continually to borrow the me-
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Checks; and *the way of works helped out by feigned faith*, which I decry in this discourse; I shall, by a plain illustration, endeavour to show them the amazing difference. A good king pities two condemned malefactors just turned off; and, at the prince's request, not only gets them cut down from the gallows, but after restoring them by proper assistance to a degree of strength, he sets them up in a genteel business, which they are to carry on under the constant direction of the prince. One of them, who is a *publican*, deeply conscious of his crimes, and wondering at the prince's condescension, does with docility and diligence whatsoever he is commanded, frequently complaining that he does so little, and expressing the greatest thankfulness, not only for his life, but for the health, light, tools, and skill he works with. The other, who is a *pharisee*, forgets that he has been reprieved from the gallows. He is full of self-importance and ingratitude: he wonders at the publican for making so much ado about the king's mercy and the prince's favour. He peevishly tells you that he does his duty; and that, if he has been guilty of some faults, he thanks God, they were not of a capital nature. He perpetually boasts of his diligence, and though he does nothing, or only spoils his work by doing it entirely against the prince's directions, he says, that he is determined to maintain himself by his own industry; and that, if he does not find it possible to get his living without help, he will condescend to accept some assistance from the prince to make both ends meet; but it shall be as little as he can help, for he does not love to be under an obligation to any body, no not to the king himself.—Now, who does not see, that, while the king graciously rewards the humble diligence of the *penitent publican*, he may justly punish the *proud pharisee* for his wretched, hypocritical obedience? and that, when Mr. Wesley and I have sometimes contended for the works of the publican, and sometimes decried those of the pharisee, we have only done the work of evangelists, and declared with the prophets and apostles of old, that *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*: and that *he will give grace and glory, and no good thing shall be withhold from them that live a godly life*? If this is an error, I ask, Wherein does it differ from that frequent and awful declaration of our Lord, *Whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased: and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted*?

rits of Christ, and to receive the quickening power of his spirit: ☞ Faith, I say, is the only instrumental cause of our free salvation [in the day of conversion.] It receives Christ and salvation, as the hand of a beggar receives an alms. ☞ And as for good works [properly so called], so far are they from being left out of the gospel-plan, that they have a MOST EMINENT place in it: ☞ They are the DECLARATIVE CAUSE † of our free justification [both in the day of trial and in the day of judgment:] A constant, uniform course of all sorts of good works, with an holy and heavenly-minded conversation, being the only evidence of a lively and saving faith, [when it has time to show itself by external works.]

Thus, [to sum up all in one sentence,] Christ alone [properly] *merits*, faith alone [properly] *apprehends*, and good works alone [properly] *evidence* salvation: Yea they are the fruit of salvation [begun;] ☞ for [all works meet for repentance spring from the free justification and initial salvation, in which we are put in our infancy; and] *the love of God shed abroad in an [established] believer's heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him*, is salvation itself; this love being the tree on which all [the external] good works [of perfect christians] grow, and making our gracious heaven below, as it will make our glorious heaven above.

(22) † The word *Cause*, left out by my opponent in his quotation of this part of my old sermon, evidently shows, that even formerly I did not so far lean to antinomianism, as not to assert the *absolute* necessity of good works, in order to the eternal salvation of adults. For, if works are the secondary *cause* of our final justification, they can no more be dispensed with in the great day, than *faith* in the day of conversion, an *effect* necessarily supposing its *cause*. If therefore I call the justification of adults *free*, it is not to exclude *faith* and *works*, its instrumental causes in the day of conversion and judgment; but to intimate, that all along we are *primarily* justified by Christ's merits, and that we *never* have one single grain of *original* worthiness.

THIRD PART.

[Since I give good works, as I have just observed, a *most eminent place* in the gospel-plan, even the place of the *evidences* that will, under Christ, *CAUSE* our *eternal salvation*] I [may well] proceed to show the injustice or unreasonableness of those, who accuse me to preach against good works. For, "*he exclaims against good works — he runs down good works,*" is an objection [which is still at times] urged against my ministry.

[Altho' I confess with sorrow, that some years ago, when I had more zeal than prudence, I dropped among you some unguarded expressions, and did not always clearly distinguish between the "good works," so called, of unhumbléd pharisees; and the genuine obedience of penitent believers; yet I should wrong the truth, and undervalue my character as your minister, if I did not observe, that, as professed antinomians have always loathed the doctrine of a *believer's* justification *by works*; so the pharisaical world has always abhorred the doctrine of a *sinner's* justification *by faith*. Hence it is that] the above-mentioned aspersions, with abundance of cruel mockings, and pitiful false reports, have been in all ages the lot of all those, who have [steadily] preached the gospel of Christ, that is, the glad news of free salvation thro' [obedient] faith in his blood.

We preach Christ crucified, says St. Paul, *to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them that believe, Christ the power and wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 23. It is plain from this, and several other passages in the epistles, that the primitive christians suffered much reproach on this account. St. Peter exhorts them thus: *Have your conversation honest among the gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may at last glorify God by your good works; for it is his will, that with well doing ye put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and make them ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.* 1. Peter, ii. 12, 15. St.

St. Paul had the same objection continually cast in his face. † *Do we then make void the law thro' faith?* says he in his own defence, Rom. iii. 31: That is, by preaching salvation *thro' faith* do we hinder people from doing the good works commanded in the law? *God forbid! yea we establish the law:* i. e. Our preaching is so far from superseding good works, that it [inforces them by the greatest variety of motives, and] puts our hearers into [the *best*, not to say] the *only* method of doing them: for it shews them how, being *sprinkled from an evil conscience*, and having their *heart purified by faith*, they shall naturally [i. e. spontaneously] produce all sorts of good works, instead of bringing forth a few counterfeit ones.

The apostle answers the same objection, Rom. vi. 1. *shall we then, who are saved by grace thro' faith, continue in sin that grace may abound?* Shall we omit doing good works; shall we do evil works, because salvation is not [by the covenant] of works, but [by that] of grace? *God forbid! How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein!* As if he had said, Is not the faith which we preach, a *faith of the operation of God*? Is it not a powerful and active principle,

G 3

that

(23) † The antinomians *by fair speeches* undesignedly *deceive the hearts of the simple*, Because St. Paul fully answers this objection, they make the injudicious believe, that he was of their sentiment; tho', upon their plan of doctrine, the objection which he starts is absolutely unanswerable. They say, "*We establish the law* by preaching Christ, who has kept it for us; and by extolling his imputed righteousness, thro' which we are for ever compleat in justifying obedience before God." Now, altho' we humbly and thankfully acknowledge with them, that our Lord has kept the Adamic law of innocence, and made it honourable for us; yet we absolutely deny, that he has kept the evangelical *law of liberty* for us. Personal obedience to it is indispensably required of every man, and if a believer does not fulfil it for himself, St. Paul and St. James inform us, that a *severer punishment*, and a more *merciless judgment* await his disobedience, than if he had never believed, Heb. x. 29. James ii. 13. Thus those holy apostles fully make up the gap of antinomian free grace, which some of our gospel ministers make it their business to widen.

turns † the heart from all sin to all righteousness ? Is it not a faith, by which we are made new creatures, and overcome the world ? 1 John, v. 1, 4.

[When people lie in darkness, doing the works of darkness, which in the dark pass either for good works that divine justice will reward, or for trifling offences that divine mercy will overlook ;† then heart-felt repentance is totally neglected, and deep mourning for sin passes for despair. Few know what it is to look on him whom they have pierced and mourn. Very few, if any, can experimentally say : *Being justified by faith we have peace with God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.*]

[Suppose the lot of a minister acquainted with the privileges of the christian dispensation, is cast in a place, where these pharisaic and common delusions generally prevail ; the first thing he has to do, is undoubtedly to uncover and shake the false foundations, on which his unawakened hearers build their hope. He must show them, that their partial, external, faithless obedience will never profit them. He must decry their imaginary good works, tear their filthy rags of fancied righteousness, sweep away their *refuges of lies*, and scourge their consciences with the curse of the law, 'till they see their nakedness, feel their guilt, and receive the sentence of death in themselves. Then, and not till then, will they stand on a level with the poor contrite publican, and

Groan the sinner's only plea,
" God be merciful to me " !]

[When a preacher is engaged in that important and thankless business, how natural is it for him, especially if he is yet young and unexperienced, or if he

(24) † How could I have had the assurance of asking these questions, if I had believed as my late Opponent, that a man, who actually commits the greatest crimes, may actually have as true, justifying faith as Abraham ever had ! I should expect, that, if such a faith did not as I said eleven years ago, *turn the heart from all sin to all righteousness*, it would at least turn it from deliberate adultery, murder, and incest.

he is heated by the opposition of obstinate pharisees, and bigoted papists, to drop some unguarded expressions against good works; or at least not to make always a proper distinction between the pharisaical works of unbelief, which Isaiah calls *filthy rags*, and the works of faith which our Lord calls *good and ornamental works*? And how glad are his adversaries, to have such a plausible pretence for throwing an odium upon him, by affirming that he explodes *all* sorts of works, even those for which our reward *will be great in heaven!*]

✂ The Devil fought against our Reformers with such weapons. All the books that the Papists wrote against them, rang with the charge of their turning good works out of christianity. ✂ Hear good Bishop Latimer, one of the best livers that ever were: *You will say now, "Here is all faith, faith; but we hear nothing of good works:" for some carnal people make such carnal objections like themselves, &c.* Sermon on twelfth day.

Of the same import is the following passage out of the Homily on Fasting: *"Thus much is said of good works, &c. to take away, so much as may be, from envious minds, and slanderous tongues, all just occasion of slanderous speaking, as tho' good works were rejected."*

Thus St. Peter, St. Paul, and our Reformers were accused of despising good works, because they exalted Christ, [and with an holy indignation trampled upon the works of unbelief, which are the foundation of all pharisaic hopes:] And [so far as I have not, by unguarded expressions, given a *just* cause of offence to those, who are glad of any occasion to decry the fundamental doctrine of salvation by faith;] I own that I rejoice to be counted worthy of suffering the same reproach, with such a cloud of faithful witnesses. Nevertheless as the scriptures say, that we must *not let the good that is in us be evil spoken of*, I shall advance some arguments, which, by God's blessing, will either convince or shame my accusers.

You

You say, [and this I speak particularly to you, that are fully set against the doctrine of *salvation by faith* :] you say “ that I preach against good works — that I run down good works, &c : ” but pray, do you know what good works are ? I am afraid you do not, or else you would † [not accuse me so rashly :] Give me leave therefore to instruct you once in this point.

All divines agree, that good works are of three sorts : (1) Works of *piety* towards God ; (2) Works of *charity* towards our neighbour ; and (3) Works of *self-denial* towards ourselves.

[To say nothing now of the good works of the *heart*, such as good thoughts, good tempers, and internal acts of repentance, faith, hope, and love ;] in the first class [of *external* good works,] which includes *works of piety*, divines rank public prayer in the church, family-prayer in private houses, and [meditation or] private prayer in one’s closet : Singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs : Reading the bible and other good books : Hearing the word preached or expounded : Receiving the sacraments : Keeping the sabbath day and festivals holy : Confessing Christ before a wicked world : And suffering the loss of one’s estate, of one’s good name, or life itself, for the gospel’s sake.

Now I appeal to every impartial hearer, yea and to thy own conscience, O man, who accusest me of preaching against good works, whether I ever taught directly or indirectly, that we ought not constantly to attend public worship in the house of God, as well as private worship in our own houses, and to perform secret worship in our closets :—Whether I ever spoke against singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs ; or against reading the bible and other good books :—

Whether

(25) † Instead of these words [not accuse me so rashly] I formerly wrote [be ashamed to accuse me so falsely.] I reject them now, because a minister of the gospel should not only speak the truth, but endeavour to speak it in the most acceptable manner. It is enough to give offence when it cannot be avoided. We should not provoke the displeasure of our hearers *without necessity*.

Whether I ever so much as hinted, that we ought not to endeavour so to dispatch our worldly business, as to hear [if possible] the word preached or expounded both on Sundays and working days — Whether I ever *intimated*, † that we can live in the neglect of God's ordinances, and break his sabbaths, without bringing upon ourselves *SWIFT DESTRUCTION* : — And lastly, whether at any time I cryed down suffering reproach for Christ, and parting with all things, even life itself, to follow him and his doctrine.

Nay, do not you know in your own breast, that my insisting upon these *good works*, and encouraging all I can to do them, is what makes me to be despised and rejected by many, and perhaps by yourself? How can you then, without wounding † [your own conscience] accuse me of preaching against good works? Are you not rather the person that speaks against them? Are you not *yourself* one of those [loose moralists] who say, that, “For their part they see no need of so many sermons, lectures, and sacraments in the church: no need of so much singing, reading, praying, and godly conversation in private houses: no need of such strictness in keeping the sabbath-day holy, &c:”

If you are one of them, you add [I fear] detraction to infidelity, and bearing false testimony to open prophaneness [or Laodicean lukewarmness.] You decry *good works* yourself by your words, your practice, and your example; and when you have done, you lay the sin at my door; you say that I preach against them!

○

(26) † My opponent has not only done this, but he has *intimated* that all believers may commit adultery, murder, and incest, not only *without bringing upon themselves swift destruction*, but with this additional advantage, that they shall infallibly “sing louder” in heaven for their deepest falls, which can never finally hurt them, because all their sins are unconditionally for ever and for ever forgiven. Had I ever insinuated such loose principles among my parishioners, I should have had a brazen forehead indeed, to look them in the face, while I made the above-mentioned appeal.

(27) † Eleven years ago I said [*common sense and common honesty.*] I now discard the expression as *needlessly* offensive.

O how will you reconcile this conduct, I shall not say to christianity, but to good manners, good sense, or even to heathen honesty!

In the *second* class of good works, divines place works of [justice and] charity; and these are of two sorts, such as are done to the *bodies*, and such as are done to the *souls* of men. The former are [for the most part] enumerated by our Lord, Mat. xxv. They consist [in being true and just in all our dealings; in *providing things honest in the sight of all men*, for us and ours; in paying our just debts as soon as possible, in protecting widows and fatherless children,] in giving food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty; in entertaining strangers, easing the oppressed, clothing the naked, attending the sick, visiting the prisoners, [and burying the dead, from scriptural and not from pharisaical motives.]

Now will any one, who scruples † [advancing an untruth,] dare affirm, that I ever spoke a word against doing any one of these good works?—Against doing them [*at improper times, from bad motives,*] in a *wrong manner*, and to *wrong ends*, I have often spoken; and so have all the preachers, who do not *daub the wall with untempered mortar*: Christ first, Mat. vi. 2. St. Paul next, 1 Cor. xiii. 1. 2, 3. and our Church after them; see the Homily on Fasting. But I ask it again, whoever heard me speak one word *against doing them*? On the contrary, have I not declared again and again, that even a *cup of cold water, given in Christ's name, should in no wise lose its reward*—should certainly be rewarded in eternal life, [if †] not *with* eternal life; { And do not some of you

(28) † Eleven years ago I said [*forging a lie.*]

(29) † Formerly I wrote [*alibo* not *with* eternal life.] The expression was perhaps too peremptory. A man may be so circumstanced in the sultry deserts of Arabia, that a *cup of cold water* may be of more *real* value to him than a diadem, and of equal worth with *his own life*. Now if he lovingly gives that cup to a disciple of Jesus, or even to his heathen enemy, for his Redeemer's or Creator's sake; I dare

you know, that within these two Years, I have lost many of my religious friends, by making a stand for the evangelical *worthiness* of the works of faith ?]

As for works of mercy done to the *souls* of men, such as [giving a christian education to our children and apprentices,] comforting the afflicted, encouraging the dejected, strengthening the weak, exhorting the careless, succouring the tempted, instructing the ignorant, [sympathizing with mourners] warning the stubborn, [detecting hypocrisy] reproofing sin, stopping immorality, rebuking profaneness, and helping each other in the narrow way ; it is known to many, that my name is cast out as evil by sabbath-breakers, swearers, and drunkards, for endeavouring to walk in these good works myself, and to make others walk in them.

And yet *you*, [I still address myself to the inveterate enemies of salvation by faith,] *you*, who possibly ridicule all those good works, and dream of being saved without them ; *you*, who do perhaps just the reverse of them, strengthening one another's hands in licentiousness and prophaneness, in sabbath-breaking, swearing, or scoffing at every thing that looks like seriousness ; *you* accuse me of despising or discountenancing good works !—O tell it not in Gath, publish it not in Askelon, lest the very Philistines laugh at the glaring inconsistency of your words and conduct.

Good

dare not say, that such a work of faith, such an act of brotherly love, may not be rewarded *with* eternal life. Jesus Christ and Dr. Owen make me rather think to the contrary : For the former says, *Whoever shall lose, or shall venture to lose his life for my sake, and the gospel's*, [which, if I mistake not, implies, among other particulars, hazarding our life for steadily adhering to the gospel-precept, that enjoins us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and to give drink to a thirsty enemy :] *shall save it*.—*Verily I say unto you, There is no man that has left house, &c. or lands for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now — and in the world to come ETERNAL LIFE*. — As for the champion of the Calvinists, he is at once so orthodox and so honest as to confess, that *thro' God's gracious appointment, the whole* [and consequently every genuine part] *of our obedience, has a REWARDABLE condecency unto ETERNAL LIFE*. But more of this in the following Essay.

Good works of the *third* class, relate to keeping under the flesh, and all its sinful appetites. The chief of these works, are a moderate use of meat, drink, and sleep; self-denial, [in apparel, furniture, and equipage;] chastity [in all its branches; subduing our slothful, rebellious flesh by] early rising, abstinence, fasting; [and, in a word, by *taking up our daily cross, and following our* abstemious, and yet laborious Lord.]

[Permit me to do as St. Paul—to *speak as it were foolishly in this confidence of boasting.*] Have I not enforced the necessity of *these* good works both *publicly and from house to house*? Have you not sometimes even gone away from this place of worship, secretly displeased at my insisting so much upon them; complaining perhaps, “that I went too far, or that no body could live up to what I preach;” and making a hundred such remarks, instead of meditating upon these words of our Lord: *With man indeed it is impossible, but with God all things are possible?* And yet you now complain that I do not preach up good works.—Pray, my brethren, be consistent; keep to one point, and do not say and unsay: I can no more be too strict, and yet make too little of good works; than I can go east and west at the same time. Only think. . . . and you will perceive that your very complaints justify me, that your sayings overturn one another, and that *your own mouths prove you perverse.*

You will probably say, Have we not heard you affirm more than once, that no body can be saved by his works: yea, that a man may go as constantly to church, as the † pharisee did to the temple, be as virtuous as he was, pay tithes as exactly as he did, and be *damned* after all? Can you deny my having preached this doctrine twenty times?”

Deny it! — By no means. It is a doctrine for which, God being my helper, I am ready to go to the stake.

(30) † From this objection it is evident, that the works which I decry'd eleven years ago, were those against which I now bear my testimony, namely *pharisaical* works.

stake. It is the very doctrine, that I have established in the former part of this discourse : How then can I deny it ?

Here methinks a † pharisee replies in triumph : “ Well then, you plead guilty to the charge : you confess that you have preached twenty times against good works.”

‡ [I deny the conclusion.] Have you not understanding [or attention] enough to see, there is a vast difference between preaching § against the [proper] merit of good works, and preaching against good works themselves ? Between saying, that obedience to the king will never get us the crown of Great Britain, and affirming that we owe the king no obedience ? In a word, between saying that good works will never procure us heaven, [as the *primary* and strictly speaking *meritorious* cause of our salvation] and declaring that we ought not to do good works ? Surely your rational faculties are not so impaired, but you may perceive, those propositions are by no means of the same import.

If I say, that eating will never make me immortal, that drinking will never turn me into an angel, and that doing my work will never take me to the third heaven ; do I so much as hint that eating is useless, drinking of no service, and doing my business unprofitable ? O how does prejudice blind even men of reason and religion ! How hardly does truth go down with us, when we do not love it ! How gladly do we dress it up in a fool's coat, that we may have some pretence to despise and reject it !

If you would speak according to *strict* truth, my brethren, you would not say that I “ preach against good works, that I run down good works, &c.” which

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is

† See the foregoing Note.

‡ When I was younger by eleven years I said, [*You are a poor logician.*]

(31) § It appears to me, that my sermon, far from being “ the best confutation of the minutes,” is consonant to that proposition, which has given such offence : *Not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition.*

is [a mistake †] as I shewed just now : but you would say, that I preach *against the [proper] merit ‡ of good works in point of salvation* : This is very true, so I do, and so I am determined to do, by God's grace, as long as I live. So did Christ and his apostles ; so do our articles and homilies ; and so the children of God have done in all ages. ¶ Those of the old testament § [far from mentioning any proper merit of their own, cried out : *Now mine eye seeth thee, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes*, Job xlii. 5. — *Wo is me for I am undone, because I am by nature, and have been by practice, a man of unclean lips*. Is. vi. 5.] Those of the new, prayed to be found in Christ, not having their own [pharisaic] righteousness which is by the law of works, but the [evangelical] righteousness which is by faith in Jesus Christ, Phil. iii. 9 : And those of our Church profess, that They are not worthy to gather the crumbs under the Lord's table, and that they do not come to it, trusting in their own righteousness, or good works, but in God's manifold and great mercies thro' Jesus Christ : so far are they from thinking, that they [properly] merit salvation [either in whole or in part.] See Com. Service.

✱ ¶ Yea, I declare it as upon the house-top, of all the false doctrines that ever came out of the pit of hell, none has done such execution for Satan in the church of God [as the pharisaic conceit that we have, or may have any proper, original merit.] Stealing, drunkenness, and adultery have slain their thousands ; but this damnable error, which is the very root of unbelief,

† [Entirely false] is the blunt expression, I used eleven years ago.

‡ Turn back to Note 31.

(32) § Instead of this addition, eleven years ago I said [owned that all their righteousnesses were as filthy rags, Is. lxiv. 6. ¶ For leaning then too much towards calvinism, I supposed that the prophet in this passage spoke of the righteousnesses of faith : but since I have dared to read my bible without prejudice, and to consult the context, I have found, that text is spoken only of the hypocritical righteousnesses of the wicked ; and in the IVth Check, p. 114, I have tried to rescue it from the hands of the antinomians, who had taught me to wrest it from its proper meaning.

unbelief, its *ten thousands*. ☞ It blinded the pharisees, and hardened the Jews against Christ. † It plunges into everlasting fire all nominal christians, who *have a form of godliness but [to the last] deny the power thereof*.

Yea, strange as the assertion may seem to some, this [pernicious error] feeds immorality, and secretly nourishes all manner of vice. The scripture tells us, 1 Cor. vi. 9, that *neither fornicators, nor effeminate, neither thieves, nor covetous, neither drunkards nor revilers, neither unrighteous nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God*. Now how comes it to pass, that so many, who are guilty of one or another of those abominations, remain as easy as if they were guiltless? Why, this damnable notion, that the merit of their works atones for the guilt of their sins, makes them think, that they shall do well enough in the end. "I get drunk now and then, says one, but I am honest." — "I oppress or cheat my neighbour, says another, but I go to church and sacrament." — "I love money or diversions above all things, says a third, but I bless God, I am neither a thief nor a drunkard." — "I am passionate and swear sometimes, says a fourth, but my heart is good, and I never keep malice in my breast; besides, I'll repent and mend some time or other before I die." — Now the sum of all those pleas amounts to this: "I do the devil's works, but I do good works too. I am guilty of one piece of wickedness, but not of all: and I hope, that, thro' the merit of the good which I do, and of the evil which I have left undone hitherto, or purpose to leave undone by and by, Christ will have mercy upon me."

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☞ Thus

† Here I leave out those words: "It [the pharisaic conceit of merit] *damned the foolish virgins, and the man who had not on a wedding garment*." And I do it, because, upon second thoughts, it appears to me, that the boldness of the foolish virgins, and the insolence of the man, who pressed to the marriage-feast without a proper dress, exactly represent the vain confidence, with which *immoral* Solifidians cry *Lord! Lord!* and make a shining profession in the robe of self-imputed righteousness; despising the evangelical robes of real righteousness and true holiness, and calling them *cobwebs* spun by spiders out of their own bowels.

✎ Thus all our [pharisaic †] delays of conversion, and all our [self-righteous †] remorseless going on in sin and wickedness, are founded upon the doctrine of [pharisaic] merits. Well then may our Church call it “ *a devilish doctrine, which is mere blasphemy against God’s mercy* :” a doctrine, which turns Christ out of his throne [by refusing him the honour of being the primary and properly meritorious cause of our salvation:] a doctrine which [by crooked ways] leads first to [worldly-mindedness or] licentiousness, as the conduct of many, who cry up the [self-righteous] merit of good works [so called] too plainly shews; and next to pharisaic morality and formality; and from both, except [a timely submission to] converting grace prevent it, into endless misery: for, *No doubt*, says Bishop Latimer in his sermon on twelfth day, *he that departeth out of this world in that opinion* [or, as he expresses it in the same paragraph, those who “ *think to be saved by the law*,” by the first covenant] “ *shall never come to heaven* :” ✎ [For they set their hearts against Christ; and, like the obstinate pharisees of old, not only mistake the works of unbelief for good works; but give them also the place of the *primary, meritorious cause* of eternal salvation; when, if they were the works of faith, they would only be a *secondary evidencing cause* of it. Now, as such men cannot possibly do this, without the greatest degree of spiritual pride, impenitency, and unbelief; it is plain, that, if they die confirmed in this grand antichristian error, they cannot be saved: for St. Paul informs us that pride is *the condemnation of the devil*; and our Lord declares, that *except we repent we shall all perish*, and that *he who believeth not shall be damned*.]

† I add the words *pharisaic* and *self-righteous*, to come at Mr. Fulsome and his numerous fraternity, whom I now should be glad to convince of their *remorseless* going on in sin, and of their *antinomian* delays of conversion,

FOURTH PART.

[Having thus laid before you the destructive nature of self-righteousness,] it is time to come to the last thing proposed, which was to show, why good works cannot [properly speaking] deserve salvation in whole or in part; and to answer the old cavil, "If good works cannot save us, [by the † covenant of works] why should we trouble ourselves about them." [In doing the former, I shall attempt to give *pharisaism* a finishing stroke: and in doing the latter, I shall endeavour to guard the scriptural doctrine of grace against *antinomianism*, which prevails almost as much among professed believers, as pharisaism does among professed moralists.]

And first, that good works cannot [strictly speaking] merit salvation in part, much less altogether, I prove by the following arguments.

(1) We must be wholly saved by the covenant of *works*, or by the covenant of *grace*; my text shewing most clearly, that a third covenant made up of [Christ's] merits [according to the first,] and divine mercy [according to the second,] is as imaginary a thing in divinity, as a fifth element made up of fire and water would be in natural philosophy. †

(2) There is less proportion between heavenly glory and our works, than between the sun and a mote that flies in the air: therefore to pretend, that they will avail towards [purchasing or properly meriting] heaven, [see the 5th note] argues want of common sense as well as want of humility.

H 3

(3) God

(33) † This is strictly true; nevertheless we must grant, that as cold water, when it is put over the fire in a proper vessel, imbibes fiery heat, and boils without damping the fire: so our works of faith, when they are laid with proper humility on the golden altar of Christ's merits, are so impregnated with his diffusive worth, as to acquire "a rewardable condecency unto eternal life:" And this they do without mixing in the least with the *primary*, or *properly meritorious* cause of our salvation; and consequently without obscuring the Redeemer's glory.

† That the *works* of faith save us by the covenant of grace [next to *Christ* and *Faith*] will be proved in the *Scriptural Essay*.

(3) God has wisely determined to save *proud man* in a way that excludes [pharisaic] boasting. *God is just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus. Where is boasting then?* says the apostle; *It is excluded,* answers he: *By what covenant,* does he ask? Is [pharisaic] boasting excluded by the covenant of works? No, *but by the law of faith,* by the covenant of grace, whose condition is [penitential, self-abasing, obedient] faith in Jesus Christ. *Therefore we conclude,* says he, *that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law.* Rom. iii. 27, 28. If our good works [properly speaking] deserve the least part of our salvation, we may justly boast that *our own arm* has got us that part of the victory; and we have reason [pharisaically] to glory in ourselves, contrary to the scriptures, which say, that *every mouth must be stopped, that boasting is excluded,* and that *he who glories, must glory in the Lord.* †

{ If St. Paul *glories* in his sufferings and labours, it is not then without Christ before God, but with Christ before the Corinthians, and under peculiar circumstances. He never imagined that his works were meritorious according to the *first* covenant; much less did he fancy that they had one single grain of *proper* merit. He perfectly knew, that if they were rewardable, it was not from any self-excellence, which he had put into them; but merely from God's gratuitous promise in the *second* covenant; from Christ's grace, by which they were wrought; from his atoning blood, in which they were washed; and from his *proper* merits, with which they were perfumed.]

{ To suppose that Adam himself, if he had continued upright, would have gloried in his righteousness as a pharisee, is to suppose him deeply fallen. In paradise God was *all in all*; and as he is also *all in all* in heaven, we may easily conceive, that, with respect to *self-exaltation*, the mouth of Gabriel is not less shut

† See a note in the *Scriptural Essay*, 2d Part, upon the *glorying* to which St. Paul excites believing *workers*, Gal. vi. 4.

shut before the throne, than that of Mary Magdalen. Therefore, if any out of hell pharisaically glory in themselves, it is only those self-righteous sons of Lucifer and Pride, to whom our Lord says still, *You are of your father the Devil, whose works ye do, when ye seek to kill me, and glory in yourselves.*]

(4) Our evil works [in general] far overbalance our good works, both in quantity and quality : Let us first then pay a righteous God the debt, [the immense debt of ten thousand talents that] we owe him, by dying the second death, which is the wages of our *bad* works ; and *then* we may talk of *buying* heaven with our *good* works.

(5) Our *best* works have such a mixture of imperfection, that they must be atoned for, and made acceptable by Christ's blood ; so far are they from atoning for the least sin, † [and *properly* meriting our acceptance] before God [even according to the second covenant.]

(6) If ever we did one truly good work, the † merit is not ours, but God's, who by his free grace " prevented, accompanied, and followed us " in the performance. For it is God, who *of his good pleasure worketh in us both to will and to do.* Phil. ii. 12. *Not I,* says the apostle after mentioning his good works, *but the grace of God in me,* 1 Cor. xv. 10, compared with James i. 17.

(7) We

(34) † Eleven years ago I said [*and making us accepted*] I now reject the expression as unguarded ; for it clashes with this proposition of St. Peter : *In every nation he that WORKETH righteousness is ACCEPTED of him.* We should take care so to secure the foundation, as not to throw down the building.

(35) † This is the very doctrine of evangelical rewardableness, or improper, *derived* merit, so honourable to Christ, so humbling to man, which I have maintained in the Vindication, p. 72, &c. Therefore, if I am a merit-monger and an heretic now, it is evident that I was so eleven years ago, when I wrote a sermon, which, as my late opponent is pleased to say, [Fin. Stroke, p. 44] "*does me much credit, and plainly shews, that I was once zealously attached to the doctrine of the church of England.*"

(7) We perpetually say at Church : *Glory be to the Father, as Creator ; and to the Son, as Redeemer ; and to the Holy Ghost, as sanctifier.* Christ is then to have all the glory of our *redemption* : But if our good works come in for any share in the *purchase* of heaven, we must come in also for some share of the glory of our [redemption. †] Thus Christ will no longer be the only Redeemer : we shall be † co-redeemers with him, and consequently we shall have a share in the doxology ; which is a blasphemous supposition.

(8) Our Lord himself decides the question in those remarkable words, *When you have done all that is commanded you ; and where is the man that [according to the law of innocence] has done [without interruption] I shall not say all, but the one half of it ? say, We are unprofitable servants.* Now it is plain, that *unprofitable servants* do not [properly] merit in whole or in part, to sit down at their master's table, and be admitted as children to a share of his estate. Therefore, if God gives heaven to believers, it is entirely owing to his free mercy, [according to his distributive justice, and the tenour of the law of faith] thro' the merits of Jesus Christ, [derived by faith] and not at all thro' the [proper] merits of our own works.

(9) I shall close these observations by St. Paul's unanswerable argument. *If righteousness comes by the law,*

(36) † I substitute the word *redemption* for the word *salvation*, that I formerly used ; because English logic demands it. By the same reason I leave out in the end of the paragraph the words "*Saviour,*" and "*joint saviours*" which I had illogically coupled with "*Redeemer,*" and "*co-redeemers.*" For, altho' it is strictly true that no man can *redeem* his brother's soul, or even *ransom* his body from the power of the grave : yet, according to the doctrine of *secondary, instrumental causes*, it is absolutely false that no man can *save* his neighbour ; for *In doing this, says St. Paul, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that bear thee.* 1 Tim. iv. 16.

(37) † I say [the law of *innocence*] to defend the works of the law of FAITH, by the instrumentality of which we shall be justified or saved in the great day. For these works flowing from Christ's grace, and never aspiring at any higher place, than that, which is allotted them, viz. the place of *justifying evidences*, they can never detract from the Saviour's honour or his grace.

law, If salvation comes by [the covenant of] works, then *Christ died in vain*, Gal. ii. 21. Whence it follows that if it comes *in part* by the works of the law † [of innocence,] part of Christ's sufferings were vain ; a supposition which ends in the same blasphemy [against the Mediator.]

[(10) That man might deserve any thing of God, upon the footing of *proper* worthiness, or merit of equivalence, God should stand in need of some thing, which it is in man's power to bestow : But this is absolutely impossible : for God being *self-sufficient* in his infinite fulness, is far above any want ; and man being a dependant creature, every moment supported by his Maker and Preserver, has nothing, and can do nothing, to which God has not a far greater right than man himself. This is what the apostle asserts where he says, *Who has given Him FIRST, and it shall be recompensed unto him again ?* — But much more in this remarkable passage : *Who maketh thee to differ from another ?* If thou sayest, The number of my talents and the proper use I have made of them : I ask again, Who gave thee those talents ? And who superadded grace, wisdom, and an opportunity to improve them ? — Here we must all give glory to God, and say with St. James, *Every good gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.*

Upon this consideration the apostle proceeds to check the christian pharisee thus : *What hast thou, that thou didst not receive ? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it ?* — Whence it follows, that, tho' St. Paul himself glories in, and *boasts* of his disinterestedness, yea solemnly declares, *No man shall stop me of this boasting*, yet he did not glory in that virtue *as if he had not received it* : No ; he gave the *original* glory of it to *Him of whom, thro' whom, and to whom are all things.* The glory of bestowing original gifts upon us belongs then to God alone ; and the *original* glory of the humility with which we receive, and of the faithfulness, with which we use those gifts, belongs also to him alone ;
altho',

altho', in the very nature of things, we have such a *derived* share of that glory, as gives room to the *reasonableness* of divine *rewards*. For why should one be rewarded more than another; yea, why should one be rewarded rather than punished, if *derived* faithfulness does not make him more *rewardable*?

Observe however, that, altho' by this *derived* faithfulness one man makes himself to differ enough from another, for God to reward him reasonably rather than another; yet no man can say to his Maker without satanic arrogance, "I have made myself to differ from such an one, therefore I make a lawful demand upon thy justice: Thus much have I done for thee; do as much for me again." For while God dispenses *punishments* according to the rules of *strict* justice; he bestows his *rewards* only according to the rules of moral aptitude and *distributive* equity, in consequence of Christ's *proper* merits, and of his own gracious promise; all men on earth, and all angels in heaven being far less capable of *properly* deserving at God's hands, than all the mites and ants in England are, of *properly* meriting any thing at the hands of the king.]

[Lastly, what slaves earn is not their own, but the master's to whom they belong; and what your horses get is your property, not theirs: Now as God has a thousand times more right to us, than masters to their slaves, and you to your horses; it follows, that, supposing we were sinless, and could properly earn any thing, our profit would be God's, not ours. So true it is, that, from the creature to the Creator, the idea of *proper* merit is as contrary to *justice* as it is to *decency*.]

As the preceding arguments [against the *proper* merit of works] will, I hope, abundantly satisfy all those [modern pharisees,] who have not entirely cast away the christian revelation, I pass to the old objection of [some ignorant] papists [and injudicious protestants.] "If good works cannot [merit us heaven, (see the 5th note) or properly] save us, why should we trouble ourselves about them?" [And in answering,

ing it, I shall guard the doctrine of obedience against the antinomians.]

As this quibbling argument may puzzle the simple, and make the boasting pharisees, that use it, triumph as if they had overturned the protestant doctrine of salvation by faith without [the] works [decied by St. Paul ;] I beg leave to shew its weakness by a comparison.

Suppose you said to me, " Your doing the work of a parish-priest will never [merit] you an archbishoprick ; " and I answered with discontent, " If doing my office will never [merit] me the see of Canterbury, why should I do it at all ? I need not trouble myself about preaching any more ; " would you not ask me whether a clergyman has no reason to attend his flock, but the wild and proud conceit that his labour must [deserve †] him a bishoprick. And I ask in my turn : Do you suppose, that a christian has no motive to do good works, but the wilder and prouder notion, that his good works must [properly speaking merit] him heaven ? [see the 5th note.]

If therefore I can shew, that he has the strongest motives, and inducements, to abound in good works without the doctrine of [proper] merits ; I hope you will drop your objection. You say, " If good works will never [*properly* merit us salvation, see the 5th note] why should we do them ? " I answer, For six good reasons, each of which [in some degree †] overturns your objection.

(1)  We

(38) † This illustration is not strictly just. If the king had millions of bishopricks to give, and if he had promised to bestow one upon every *diligent* clergyman ; solemnly declaring that all who *neglect* their charge, should not only miss the ecclesiastical dignity annexed to diligence, but be put to a shameful death as so many murderers of souls, the cases would then be exactly parallel. Besides, every clergyman is not a candidate for a bishoprick, but every man is a candidate for heaven. Again, a clergyman may be as happy in his parsonage as a bishop in his palace ; but if a man misses heaven, he sinks into hell. These glaring truths I overlooked when I was a " *LATE evangelical preacher*."

† Formerly I said [*entirely*] but experience has taught me otherwise.

(1) ☞ We are to do good works, to shew our obedience to our heavenly Father. ☞ As a child obeys his parents, not to *purchase* their estate, but because he is their child [and does not chuse to be disinherited :] so believers obey God, not to get heaven for their wages ; but, because he is their Father, [and they would not provoke him to disinherit them. †]

(2) ☞ We are to abound in all good works, to be justified before men [now, and before the Judge of all the earth in the great day ;] and to shew that our faith is saving. St. James strongly insists upon this, chap. ii. 18. ☞ *Shew me thy faith without thy works*, says he, *and I will shew thee my faith by my works* : That is, Thou sayest, thou hast faith, [because thou wast once justified by faith ;] but thou doest not the works of a believer : thou canst follow vanity, and conform to this evil world : thou canst swear or break the sabbath ; lie, cheat, or get drunk ; rail at thy neighbour, or live in uncleanness : in a word, thou canst do one or another of the devil's works : Thy works therefore give thee the lie, and shew that thy faith is [now like] the devil's faith ; for if *faith without works is dead*, how doubly dead must faith with *bad works* be ! ‡ [And how absurd is it to suppose, that thou canst be *instrumentally* justified by a *dead* faith, or *declaratively* justified by *bad* works, either before men or in the sight of God !] But *I will shew thee my faith by my works*, adds the apostle : i. e. By constantly abstaining from all evil works, and steadily walking in all sorts of good works, I will make thee confess, that

(39) † This argument is weak without the additions. Our Lord informs us, that when the Father in the gospel says to his fair-spoken child, SON, *Go work to-day in my vineyard*, he answers, *I go, Sir, and goes not* : And God himself says, *I have nourished and brought up CHILDREN, but they have rebelled against me*. Wo to the parents, who have such children, and have no power to cut off an entail !

(40) ‡ If this single clause of my old sermon stands, so will the Minutes and the Checks. But the whole argument is a mere jest, if a man that wallows in adultery, murder, or incest, may have as true, justifying faith, as David had when he killed Goliath.

that I am really *in Christ* a new creature, and that my faith is living and genuine.

+X (3) Our Saviour told his disciples, that they were to  do good works, not to purchase heaven, but that others might be stirred up to serve God. You then, that have found the way of salvation by Christ, *let your light so shine before men, that even they, who speak evil of the doctrine of faith, seeing your good works may* † *glorify your Father who is in heaven.* 
Mat. v. 16.

(4)  We are to do good works out of *gratitude* and *love* to our dear Redeemer, who having [conditionally] purchased heaven for us with his precious blood,  asks the small return of our love and obedience. *If you love me, says he, keep my commandments,* John xiv. 15. [This motive is noble, and continues powerful so long as we *keep our first love*. But alas! it has little force with regard to the myriads, that rather *fear* than love God: And it has lost its force in all those, who *have denied the faith, or made shipwreck of it, or cast off their first faith, and consequently their first love, and their first gratitude*. The multitude of these, in all ages, has been innumerable. I fear, we might say of justified believers, what our Lord did of the cleansed lepers: *Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?* Alas! like the apostates mentioned by St. Paul, they *are turned aside after the flesh, after the world, after fables, after antinomian dotages, after vain jangling, after Satan himself.* 1 Tim. v. 15.]

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(5) We

(41) † This argument is quite frivolous, if my late opponent is right. *How has many a poor soul, says he, who has been faithless thro' the fear of man, even blessed God for Peter's denial!* Five Letters. SECOND edition revised, p. 40. Hence it appears, that denying Christ with oaths and curses, will cause "*many a poor soul to bless God,*" i. e. to *glorify our heavenly Father*. Now if *horrid crimes* do this as well as *good works*, is it not absurd to inforce the practice of *good works*, by saying, that *they alone* have that blessed effect? But my opponent may easily get over this difficulty before those, whose battles he fights. He needs only charge me with *disingenuity* for not quoting the THIRD revised edition of his book, if he has published such a one.

(5) We are to be careful to maintain good works, [not only that we may not lose our confidence in God, 1 John iii. 19, &c. but also] that we may nourish and increase our faith or spiritual life; [or, to use the language of St. James, that *faith may work with our works*, and that *by works our faith may be made perfect*.] As a man [in health, who is † threatened by no danger,] does not walk that his walking may procure him life [or save his life from destruction;] but that he may preserve his health, and [add to] his activity: So a believer, does not walk in good works to get [an initial life of grace, or a primary title to an] eternal life [of glory:] but to keep up and increase the vigour of his faith, by which he has [already a title to, and the earnest of] eternal life [in heaven. For as the best health without any exercise is soon destroyed, so the strongest faith without works will soon droop and die. Hence it is that St. Paul exhorts us to *Hold faith and a good conscience, which some having put away by refusing to walk in good works, concerning faith have made shipwreck*.]

(6) ☞ We are not to do good works to obtain heaven by them [as if they were the *primary*, and *properly meritorious* cause of our salvation.] This † proud, antichristian motive would poison the best doings of the greatest saints, if *saints* could thus trample upon the blood of their Saviour: Such a wild conceit being only the pharisee's cleaner way to hell. But we are to do them, because they shall be *rewarded* in heaven [as

(42) † Formely I did not consider that as Noah *walked* into the ark, and Lot out of Sodom, to save their lives: so sinners are called to turn from their iniquity, and *do* that which is lawful and right to *save* their *souls alive*. Nor did I observe, that saints are commanded to *walk in good works*, lest the destroyer overtake them, and they become *sons of perdition*. However, in Babel, such capital oversights did me "*much credit*."

(43) † Here I leave out the word *selfish*, as being ambiguous. It is not *selfishness*, but true wisdom and well-ordered self-love, *evangelically* to labour for the meat that endureth to everlasting life. Not to do it is the height of Laodicean stupidity, or antinomian conceit.

[as well as †] with heaven. ☞ To understand this we must remember, that, according to the gospel and our liturgy, *God opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers* : [because true believers are always true workers ; true faith always working by love to God's commandments. Next to Christ then, to speak the language of some injudicious divines,] *Faith alone*, when it *works by love*, takes us to heaven : [Or rather, to avoid an apparent contradiction, *Faith and its works* are the way to heaven :] But as there are stars of different magnitude in the material heaven, so also in the spiritual. Some who, like St. Paul, have eminently shined by the *work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labour of love*, shall shine like the brightest stars, [or the sun :] and ☞ others, who, like the dying thief and infants, have had [little † or] no time to shew their faith [or holiness] by their works, shall enjoy a less degree of glorious blis : But all shall ascribe the whole of their salvation only to the mercy of God, the merits of Christ, and the efficacy of his blood and spirit, ☞ according to St. John's vision : *I beheld, and lo a great multitude of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, with palms in their hands, cloathed with robes, that they had washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb : And* [while our Lord said to them by his gra-

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cious

(44) † Here I leave out *altho' not*, and supply *as well as*, for the reasons assigned in the *Scriptural Essay*.

(45) † Mr. H. triumphs in his *Finishing Stroke*, p. 50, last note, thro' my omission of those two words. But without having recourse to "*magical power*," or even to "*Logica Helvetica*," to reconcile my sermon with my Checks ; I desire unprejudiced Calvinists to mention any one besides the dying thief, that ever evidenced his faith by confessing Christ, when his very apostles denied or forsook him ; by openly praying to him, when the multitudes reviled him ; by humbly pleading guilty before thousands ; by publicly defending injured innocence ; by boldly reprovng blasphemy ; by kindly admonishing his fellow-malefactor ; and by fully acknowledging Christ's *kingly* office, when he was crowned with thorns, and hanging on the cross ? Did St. John, did Mary Magdalen, did even the Virgin Mary, *show their faith* by such glorious *works*, under such unfavourable circumstances ? O ye Solidians, where is your attention ?

cious looks, according to the doctrine of secondary, instrumental causes, *Walk with me in white, for you are WORTHY, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you, for I was hungry and ye gave me meat, &c.*] they cried [according to the doctrine of primary and properly-meritorious causes] not “Salvation to OUR endeavours and good works;” but *Salvation to OUR God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

[Thus, by the rules of celestial courtesy, to which our Lord vouchsafes to submit in glory; while the saints *justly* draw a veil over their works of faith, to extol *only* their Saviour’s merits; HE *kindly* passes over his own blood and righteousness, to make mention *only* of their works and obedience. They, setting their seal to the first gospel axiom, shout with great truth, “*Salvation to God and the Lamb*: And HE, setting his seal to the second gospel-axiom, replies with great condescension: *Salvation to them that are worthy! Eternal salvation to all that obey me.* Rev. iii. 4. Heb. v. 9.]

[Therefore, notwithstanding the perpetual assaults of proud pharisees, and of self-humbled antinomians; the two gospel-axioms stand unshaken upon the two fundamental, inseparable doctrines of faith and works — of *proper* merit in Christ, and *derived* worthiness in his members. Penitent believers freely receive all from the God of grace and mercy, thro’ Christ; and humble workers freely return all to the God of holiness and glory, thro’ the same adorable Mediator. Thus God has *all the honour of freely bestowing* upon us a crown of righteousness, in a way of judicious mercy and distributive justice; while we, thro’ grace, have † *all the honour of freely receiving it*, in a way of penitential

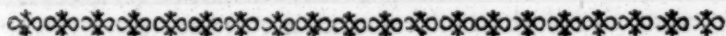
(46) † OBJECTION. “We have all the honour thro’ grace! (says a friend of voluntary humility) What honour can you possibly ascribe to *man*, when you have already ascribed *all* honour to God? But one, who begins his sermon by pleading for *merit*, may well conclude it by taking from God part of his *honour, dominion, and praise.*” —

ANSWER,

penitential faith and obedient gratitude. To him therefore, one eternal Jehovah in Father Son and Holy Ghost, be ascribed *all* the merit, honour, praise, and dominion, *worthy* of a God, for ever and ever.]

END OF THE GUARDED SERMON.

ANSWER. I plead only for an interest in Christ's *merits* thro' faith and the works of faith. This interest I call *derived worthiness*, which would be as dishonourable to Christ, as it is honourable to believers. I confess also, that I aspire at the *honour* of shouting in heaven, *All-lujab to God and the Lamb!* In the mean time I hope, that I may pay an inferior *honour* to all men, ascribe *derived dominion* to the king, bestow *deserved praise* upon my pious opponents, and claim the *honour* of being their obedient servant in Christ, without robbing the Lamb of his peculiar *worthiness* and God of his proper *honour, dominion, and praise*.



A P P E N D I X.

I Flatter myself that the preceding discourse shews, (1) that it is very possible to preach *free grace*, without directly or indirectly preaching Calvinism and *free wrath*: And (2) that those who charge Mr. Wesley and me with subverting the articles of our Church, which guard the doctrine of grace, do us great wrong. Should God spare me, I shall also bear my testimony to the truth of the doctrine of *conditional* Predetermination and Election, maintained in the 17th article, to which I have not had an opportunity of setting my seal in this work.

As I have honestly laid my helvetic bluntness, and antinomian mistakes before the public in my notes; I am not conscious of having misrepresented my old sermon in my enlarged discourse. Should however the *keener* eyes of my opponents discover any real mis-

taken in my additions, &c. upon information I shall be glad to acknowledge and rectify it. Two or three sentences I have left out, merely because they formed *vain* repetitions, without adding any thing to the sense. But, whenever I have, for conscience sake, made any alteration, that *affects*, or *seems* to affect the doctrine; I have informed the reader of it, and of my reason for it in a note; that he may judge whether I was right twelve years ago, or whether I am now: And where there is no such note at the bottom of the page, there is an addition in the context, directing to the *FIFTH note*, where the alteration is acknowledged, and accounted for according to the reasonable condition, which I have made in the preface.

I particularly recommend the perusal of *that* note, of the *first*, and of the *twenty-first* to those, who do not yet see their way thro' the streights of pharisaism and antinomianism, thro' which I have been obliged to steer my course in handling a text, which, of all others, *seems* at first sight best calculated to countenance the mistakes of my opponents.

Sharp-sighted readers will see by my sermon, that nothing is more difficult than *rightly to divide the word of God*. The ways of *Truth* and *Error* lie close together, tho' they never coincide. When some preachers say, that "The road to heaven passes very near the mouth of hell," they do not mean, that the road to heaven and the road to hell are one and the same. If I assert, that the way of *Truth* runs parallel to the ditch of *Error*, I by no means intend to confound them. Let *Error* therefore come, in some things, ever so near *Truth*, yet it can no more be the *Truth*, than a filthy ditch, that runs parallel to a good road, can be the road.

You wonder at the athletic strength of Milo, that brawny man. who stands like an anvil under the bruising fist of his antagonist: Thro' the flowery paths of youth and childhood trace him back to his cradle; and, if you please, consider him unborn: He is Milo still. Nay view him just conceived or quickened, and tho'

tho' your naked eye scarcely discovers the *punctum saliens*, by which he differs from a non-entity or a lifeless thing; yet even then the difference between him and a non-entity is not only *real*, but *prodigious*; for it is the vast difference between *something* and *nothing*, between *life* and *no life* — In like manner trace back Truth to its first stamina; investigate it till you find its *punctum saliens*, its first difference from Error; and even then, you will see an *essential*, a *capital* difference between them, tho' your short-sighted or inattentive neighbour can perceive none.

It is often a thing little in appearance, that turns the scale of truth; nevertheless, the difference between a scale *turned* or *not turned*, is as real as the difference between a *just* and a *false* weight, between *right* and *wrong*. I make this observation: (1) To show that altho' my opponents come very near me in some things, and I go very near them in others, yet the difference between us is as essential as the difference between *light* and *darkness*, *truth* and *error*: And (2) to remind them and myself, that we ought so much the more to exercise christian forbearance towards each other, as we find it difficult, whenever we do not stand upon our guard, to do justice to every part of the Truth, without seeming to dissent even from ourselves. However, our short-sightedness and twilight knowledge do not alter the nature of things. The truth of the anti-pharisaic and anti-Crispian gospel is as immutable as its eternal Author; and whether I have marked out its boundaries with a tolerable degree of justness or not, I must say as the heathen poet:

Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra citra que nequit consistere rectum. †

† Truth is confined within her firm bounds: nay, there is a middle line equally distant from all extremes; on that line she stands, and to miss her, you need only step over it to the right hand or to the left.

A
SCRIPTURAL ESSAY

On the astonishing rewardableness of Works according to the Covenant of Grace :

CONTAINING

- I. A VARIETY of plain Scriptures, which shew, that HEAVEN ITSELF is the gracious REWARD of the WORKS of Faith, and that Believers may lose that Reward by bad Works. — II. AN ANSWER to the most plausible Objections of the Solifidians against this Doctrine. — III. SOME REFLECTIONS upon the unreasonableness of those, who scorn to work with an Eye to the Reward, that God offers to excite us to Obedience.

To the Law and to the Testimony. Is. viii. 8.

FIRST PART.

HAVING particularly guarded in the preceding discourse the doctrine of SALVATION by the covenant of grace, and having endeavoured to secure the foundation of the gospel against the unwearied attacks of the Pharisees ; I shall now particularly guard the WORKS of the covenant of grace, and by that means I shall secure the superstructure against the perpetual assaults of the Antinomians : a part of my work this, which is so much the more important, as the use of a strong foundation is only to bear up an useful structure.

None but fools act without motive. To deprive a wise man of every motive to act, is to keep him in total inaction : and to rob him of some grand motive, is considerably to weaken his willingness to act, or his fervour in acting. The burning love of God is undoubtedly

doubtedly the most generous motive to obedience : but alas ! thousands of good men, like Cornelius, are yet strangers to that powerful sensation *shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost* : In thousands of weak believers, love is not yet ^{properly} kindled ; it is rather a *smoking flax* than a blazing fire : in thousands of Laodicean professors it is scarce *lukewarm* ; and in all apostates *it is waxed cold*. Therefore, in the present, sickly state of the church militant, it is as absurd in preachers, to urge no motive of good works but *grateful love* ; as it would be in physicians to insist, that a *good stomach* must be the only motive, from which their patients ought to take either food or physic.

Our Lord far from countenancing our doctrinal refinements in this respect, perpetually secures the practice of good works by *promising heaven* to all that persevere in doing them ; while he deters us from sin, by *threatening destruction* to all that persist in committing it ; working thus alternately upon our *hopes* and *fears*, those powerful springs of action in the human breast.

The force of this double incentive to practical religion, I greatly weakened ; when, being carried away by the stream of solifidianism, I rashly said in my old † sermon, after some of our reformers, that “ good works shall be rewarded *in* heaven and eternal life, altho’ not *with* eternal life and heaven.” An antinomian error this, which I again publicly renounce, and against which I enter the following scriptural protest.

If the oracles of God command us to work FROM an *initial* life of *grace*, FOR an *eternal* life of *glory* ; frequently annexing the promise of heavenly bliss to good works, and threatening all *workers of iniquity* with hell-torments ; it follows, that heaven will be the *gracious reward* of good works, and hell the *just wages* of bad ones.

I readily grant however, that, if we consider ourselves merely as *sinners*, in the light of the *first* gospel-axiom ; and according to the *covenant of works*, which
we

† See the notes 29, and 44.

we have so frequently broken ; heaven is MERELY the GIFT of God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ : for, according to *that* covenant, destruction is the wages of all who have committed sin. But, if we are *converted* sinners, or obedient *believers* ; and if we consider ourselves in the light of the *second* gospel axiom, and according to the *covenant of grace* ; every unprejudiced person, who believes the bible, must allow that heaven is the gracious REWARD of our works of faith.

An illustration may help the reader to see the justness of this distinction — A charitable nobleman discharges the debts of ten insolvent prisoners, sets them up in great or little farms, according to their respective abilities ; and laying down a thousand pounds before them, he says : “ I have already done much for you, but I will do more still. I freely give you this purse, to encourage your industry. You shall share this gold among you, if you manage your farms according to my directions : but if you let your fields be over-run with thorns, you shall not only lose the bounty I design for the industrious, but forfeit all my preceding favours.” Now who does not see, that the thousand pounds thus laid down, are a *free gift* of the nobleman ; that nevertheless, upon the performance of the condition or terms he has fixed, they become a *gracious reward* of industry ; and that consequently, the obtaining of this reward turns now entirely upon the *works of industry* performed by the farmers.

Just so eternal salvation is the *free gift* of God thro' Jesus Christ ; and yet the *obtaining* of it [on the part of adults] turns entirely upon their *works of faith* ; that is, upon their *works* as well as upon their *faith*. Hence the scripture says indifferently, *He that BELIEVETH is NOT CONDEMNED* ; and, *If thou DOEST WELL shalt thou not be ACCEPTED ? All that BELIEVE are JUSTIFIED* ; and, *He that WORKETH righteousness is ACCEPTED*. — Our Lord, speaking of a weeping penitent, says equally : *Her sins, which are many, are forgiven ; for she LOVED much* ; and, *Thy sins are forgiven,*
thy

thy FAITH hath saved thee. — As for St. Paul, tho' he always justly excludes the works of unbelief, and merely ceremonial works, yet he so joins *faith*, and the *works* of faith, as to shew us, they are equally necessary to eternal salvation: *There is no condemnation*, says he, *to them that are in Christ* by faith: [Here is the Pharisee's portion] *who WALK not after the flesh, but after the spirit* [Here is the Antinomian's portion.] Hence it appears, that living faith *now* and always works righteousness; and that the works of righteousness *now* † and always accompany faith, so long as it remains *living*.

'I know this is the doctrine,' says judicious Mr. Baxter, 'that will have the loudest outcries raised against it; and will make some cry out, Heresy, Poper, Socinianism! and what not? For my own part the Searcher of hearts knoweth, that not singularity, or any good will to Popery provoketh me to entertain it: but that I have earnestly sought the Lord's direction upon my knees, before I durst adventure on it; and that I resisted the light of this conclusion as long as I was able.'—May this bright testimony make way for an illuminated cloud of prophets and apostles! and may the sun of righteousness rising behind it, so scatter the shades of error, that we may awake out of our laodicean sleep, and antinomian dreams, and see a glorious, unclouded gospel-day!

That in subordination to Christ our *eternal* salvation depends upon good works, i. e. upon the works of faith, will, I think, appear indubitable to them that believe the bible, and candidly consider the following scriptures, in which HEAVEN and eternal life IN GLORY are suspended upon *works*, if they spring from a sincere *belief* in the light of our dispensation; I say, if they spring from true *faith*, it being absolutely impossible for an *heathen*, and much more for a *christian*,
to

† I use the word *now*, to stop up the antinomian gap, which one of my opponents tries to keep open by insinuating, that tho' a true believer may commit adultery and murder *now*, yet he will *always* work righteousness before he die,

to work righteousness without BELIEVING in some degree that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, as well as the punisher of them that presumptuously sin against him : For without faith it is impossible to please God ; all faithless works springing merely from superstition, like those of Baal's priests, or from hypocrisy like those of the pharisees. Having thus guarded again the doctrine of FAITH, I produce some of the many scriptures that *directly* or *indirectly* annex the above-mentioned reward to WORKS : And,

(1) To consideration, conversion, and exercising ourselves to godliness. — ' Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions, &c. he shall surely live, he shall not die. — When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, &c. he shall save his soul alive. — Wherefore turn yourselves and live ye. — Exercise thyself unto godliness, for it is profitable unto all things ; having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.'

(2) To doing the will of God. — ' He that does the will of my Father, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. — He that does the will of God, abideth for ever. — Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister — i. e. the same is an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ.'

(3) To confessing Christ, and calling upon the name of the Lord. — ' With the mouth confession is made to salvation. — Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father : But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father. — Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved.'

(4) To self-denial : ' If thy hand offend thee, cut it off : It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go to hell, &c. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out : It is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire. — There is no man, that hath left house, or brethren, &c.

‘ &c. for my sake and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundred fold now, and in the world to come eternal life.—He that *loseth* his life for my sake, shall find it, &c.—He that *hateth* his life in this world, shall keep it unto *life eternal*.’—And our Lord supposes that by “*gaining the world*,” a man may “*lose his own soul*.” For, according to the covenant of grace, even reprobates are not totally lost, till they make themselves *sons of perdition* like Judas; i. e. till they personally and absolutely *lose their own souls* and heaven, by their personal and obstinate pursuit of worldly things.

(5) *To diligent labour, and earnest endeavours.*—‘O man of God, lay hold on *eternal life*—Work out your own *salvation*.—Labour for the meat that endureth to *everlasting life*—Keep thy heart with all *diligence*, for out of it are the issues of *life*.—In so doing thou shalt *save thyself*.—Narrow is the gate that leads to *life*.—Strive to enter in.—The violent *press* into the kingdom of God, and take it by force.’

(6) *To keeping the commandments.*—‘Blessed are they that do his commandments, &c. that they may enter thro’ the gates into the city,’ i. e. into heaven.—There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that *worketh* abomination.—If thou wilt enter into *life*, † keep the commandments.—Thou hast answered right: This do and thou shalt *live*.—There is one *Lawgiver*, who is able to *save* and to *destroy*:’ [some of whose laws run thus:] ‘Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven—Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy—With what judgment ye *judge*, ye shall be *judged*—For he shall have judgment *without* mercy, that hath *shewed* no mercy.—BLESSED are the *peace-makers*, for they shall be called the children of God,’ [and, of course, the heirs of the kingdom.]—The king shall say unto them, Come, ye BLESSED of my Father, *inherit the kingdom* prepared for you,

K

‘ for

† See the excellent comment of our church upon these words of our Lord, IVth Check, p. 27.

for I was hungry and ye gave me meat, &c.—Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the REWARD of the inheritance: But he that does wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons. — Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, &c. for this ye know, that no whoremonger, &c. hath ANY inheritance in the kingdom of God.—The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, &c. of which I tell you [believers] that they, who do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

(7) *To running, fighting, faithfully laying up treasure in heaven, and feeding the flock of God.* — ‘They, who run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize: So run that you may obtain. Now they are temperate in all things to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible. I therefore so run—fight—and bring my body into subjection,’ [that I may obtain:] ‘lest I myself should be cast away:’ i. e. should not be approved of, should be rejected, and lose my incorruptible crown. — ‘Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life. — Lay up treasure in heaven. — Make yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when you fail on earth, they may receive you into everlasting habitations — Charge them who are rich, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. — Feed the flock of God, &c. being examples to the flock, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive the crown of glory, that fadeth not away.’

(8) *To love and charity.* ‘Tho’ I have all faith, &c. and have no charity, I am nothing.—She,’ [the woman] ‘shall be saved, &c. if they,’ [womankind] ‘continue in faith and charity. — Whosoever hateth his brother hath not eternal life—He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death—We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren

‘ thren — If any man *love not* the Lord Jesus, let him
 ‘ be *anathema* — The *crown of life*, which the Lord
 ‘ hath promised to them that *love him*.’

(9) *To a godly walk.* ‘ There is *no condemnation*
 ‘ to them, &c. that *walk not* after the flesh — As
 ‘ many as *walk* according to this rule, *mercy* [be, or
 ‘ will be] on them. — If we *walk in the light*’ [of
 ‘ good works, Mat. v. 15.] ‘ the blood of Christ cleans-
 ‘ eth us from all sin. — The Lord will give grace and
 ‘ glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them
 ‘ that *walk uprightly*. — Many’ [fallen believers]
 ‘ *walk*, &c. enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end
 ‘ is *destruction*.’

(10) *To persevering watchfulness, faithfulness, prayer,*
 ‘ &c. ‘ He that *endureth* unto the end, the same shall be
 ‘ *saved*. — Be *faithful* unto death, and I will give thee
 ‘ the *crown of life*. — Blessed is the man that *endureth*
 ‘ temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the
 ‘ *crown of life*. — *Because* thou hast *kept* the word of
 ‘ my patience, I will also keep thee, &c. — To him
 ‘ that *overcometh*, will I grant to sit with me in my
 ‘ *throne*. — To him that *keepeth* my works unto the
 ‘ end, &c. will I give the *morning star*. — Take heed
 ‘ to yourselves, &c. *watch* and *pray always*, that ye
 ‘ may be counted *worthy to escape*, &c. and to stand
 ‘ before the Son of man.’ In a word,

(11) *To patient continuance in mortifying the deeds of*
 ‘ *the body, and in well doing*. — ‘ If ye live after the flesh,
 ‘ ye shall *die*; but if ye thro’ the spirit *mortify* the
 ‘ deeds of the body, ye shall *live*. — For he that *soweth*
 ‘ to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap *perdition*; but he
 ‘ that *soweth* to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap *life*
 ‘ *everlasting*: And let us not be weary in *well-doing*,
 ‘ for in due season we shall REAP’ [not, if we faint or
 ‘ not, but] ‘ IF we faint not. — He that *reapeth* receiv-
 ‘ eth *wages*, and gathereth fruit unto *life eternal*. —
 ‘ Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end *ever-*
 ‘ *lasting life*.’ — God, at the revelation of his *righteous*
 ‘ *judgment*, will render to every man according to his
 ‘ *deeds*: *eternal life* to them, who, by patient conti-

‘nuance in *well-doing*, seek for *glory*.—Anguish upon every soul of man that *does evil*, &c. but *glory* to every man that *worketh good*, &c. for there is no respect of persons with God.’

Is it not astonishing, that, in sight of so many plain scriptures, the Solifidians should still ridicule the passport of good works, and give it to the winds as a “paper-kite”? However, if the preceding texts do not appear sufficient, I can send another volley of gospel-truths, to show that the initial salvation of believers themselves may be *lost thro’ bad works*.

‘I know thy *works*, &c. so then because thou art lukewarm I will spue thee out of my mouth.—What doth it profit, my brethren, tho’ a man’ [*tis* any one, and two verses below, any one of you, James ii. 14, 16,] ‘say he hath faith, and hath not works’ [*now?*] ‘Can faith save him? &c. Faith, if it hath not works, is dead being alone.—Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be *damp’d*’ [in the original it is the same word, which is rendered *damned*, Mark xvi. 16.] — ‘If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if *we* [believers] *deny* him, he will also deny us.—Add to your faith *virtue*, &c. charity, &c. if ye *do* these things ye shall never fall, for *so* an ENTRANCE shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the *everlasting kingdom* of our Lord.—It had been *better* for them, that have escaped the pollutions of the world thro’ the *knowledge* of our Saviour, ‘[i. e. for believers]’ not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to *turn* from the *holy commandment* delivered unto them.—*Every* tree, that bringeth not forth *good fruit*, is *cut down*, and cast into the *fire*.—*Every* branch IN ME, that beareth not fruit, my Father taketh away—Abide in me, &c. If a man ‘abide not in me’ [by keeping my commandments in faith] ‘he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered;’ and’ [he shall share the fate of the branches that have *really* belonged to the natural vine, and now bear no more fruit] ‘men gather them, and cast them

‘ into the fire, and they are burned.’ — The fig-tree in the Lord’s moral vineyard is cut down, for *not bearing fruit*. — ‘ Him that *finneth* I will *bring* out of my book — Some having put away a *good conscience*, concerning *faith* have made *shipwreck* — Such as *turn back* to their own wickedness, the Lord shall lead them forth with the *evil doers*. — Towards thee, goodnefs, if’ [by continuing in obedience] ‘ thou *continue* in his goodnefs, otherwise thou shalt be *cut off*.’ Again, ‘ For the wickedness of their *doings*, I will drive them out of my house, I will *love* them *no more* — Some are already *turned aside* after Satan — having *damnation* because they have *cast off* their *first faith* — the faith that *works* by love — the mystery of faith kept in a *pure conscience* — the *faith unfeigned*’ [that the apostle couples with] ‘ a *good conscience* — the faith that is made perfect by works’ — the faith that cries like Rachel, *Give me children, give me good works, or else I die* — the faith that faints without obedience, and actually *dies* by bad works; the following scriptures abundantly proving that *faith*, and consequently *the just* who *lives by faith*, can *die by bad works*.

‘ When a righteous man † doth *turn* from his *righteousness*, and commit iniquity, &c. he shall *DIE* in his sin, and his *righteousness*, which he has done, shall *not* be remembered.’ Ezek. iii. 20. — Again,
‘ When

† That this is spoken of a *truly-righteous man*, i. e. of a believer, appears from the following reasons: (1) The righteous here mentioned, is opposed to the *wicked* mentioned in the context: As surely then as the word *wicked* means *there* one *really-wicked*, so does the word *righteous* mean *here* one *truly-righteous*. (2) The righteous man’s turning from his righteousness, is opposed to the wicked man’s turning from his iniquity: If therefore the righteous man’s righteousness is to be understood of *feigned* goodness, so the wicked man’s iniquity must be understood of *feigned* iniquity. (3) The crime of the righteous man here spoken of is *turning from his righteousness*: but if his righteousness were only an hypocritical righteousness, he would rather deserve to be commended for renouncing it; a wicked, *fly* pharisee being more odious to God than a barefaced sinner, who has
honesty

‘ When the *righteous*, &c. *does* according to all the
‘ *abominations* that the wicked man does, shall he
‘ *live* ? All his *righteousness*, that he has *done*, shall
‘ not be mentioned : in his *trespass* that he hath tres-
‘ passed, and in his *sin* that he hath sinned, in them
‘ shall he *DIE*.’ Ezek. xviii. 24.—Once more : ‘ The
‘ *righteousness* of the *righteous* shall not deliver him
‘ in the day of his transgression, &c. When I say to
‘ the *righteous*, that he shall *surely live* ; † if he trust
‘ to his *righteousness*, and *commit* iniquity he shall
‘ *die* for it.’ Ezek. xxxiii. 13.

It seems, that God foreseeing, the Solifidians would
be hard of belief, notwithstanding the great ado they
make about *faith*, condescended to their infirmity,
and kindly spoke the same thing over and over ; for,
setting again the broad seal of heaven to the truth
that chiefly guards the second gospel-axiom, he says
for the fourth time, ‘ When the *righteous turneth*
‘ from his *righteousness*, and committeth iniquity, he
‘ shall even *DIE thereby* : But if the wicked *turns* from
‘ his wickedness, and *DOETH* that which is lawful and
‘ right, he shall *LIVE thereby*.’ Ezek. xxxiii. 18, 19.

If Ezekiel is not allowed to be a competent judge,
let *Christ himself* be heard : ‘ Then his Lord said unto
‘ him : O thou wicked servant, I *forgave thee all* that
‘ debt, &c. Shouldest not thou also have had com-
‘ passion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on
‘ thee ? And his Lord was *wroth*, and delivered him
‘ to the *tormentors*.’ Mat. xviii. 26, &c.

All

honestly enough not to put on the mask of religion, Rev. iii. 15. —
(4) Part of this apostate’s *punishment* will consist in NOT having *the*
righteousness that he has done remembered : but if his *righteousness* is a
false *righteousness*, or mere hypocrisy, the divine *threatening* proves a
precious *promise* ; for you cannot please an hypocrite better, than by
assuring him, that his hypocrisy shall never be remembered. What a
pity is it, that, to defend our mistakes we should fix egregious non-
sense, and gross contradiction upon the only *wise* God !

† These words are another indubitable proof, that *the righteous*
here mentioned is a *truly-righteous* person ; as the holy and true God
would never say to a wicked pharisee, that *he shall surely live*.

All the preceding scriptures are thus summed up by our Lord, Mat. xxv. 46, *These* [the persons who have not finally done the works of faith] *shall go into everlasting punishment; but the righteous* [those who have done them to the end, at least from the time of their re-conversion if they were backsliders] *shall go into eternal life.* This doctrine agrees perfectly with the conclusion of the sermon on the mount: *Whoever HEARETH these sayings of mine, and DOTH THEM; I will liken him to a WISE man, who built his house upon a rock: and every one that HEARETH these sayings of mine, and DOTH THEM NOT, shall be likened unto a FOOLISH man, who built his house upon the sand.* — Nay, this is Christ's explicit doctrine: No words can be plainer than these: *They that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth; they that have DONE GOOD, unto the resurrection of LIFE; and they that have DONE EVIL, unto the resurrection of CONDEMNATION,* John v. 29. All creeds therefore, like that of St. Athanasius, and all faith, must end in practice. This is a grand article of what might, with peculiar propriety, be called *the catholic faith* — the faith that is common to, and essential under *all* the dispensations of the everlasting gospel, in *all* countries and ages — “the faith, which except a man believe *faithfully*,” i. e. so as to *work righteousness* like the good and *faithful* servant, “he cannot be saved.”

SECOND PART.

As some difficulties probably rise in the reader's mind against the preceding doctrine, it may not be amiss to produce them in the form of objections, and to answer them more fully than I have yet done.

I. OBJECTION. “All the scriptures, that you have produced, are nothing but *Descriptions* of those who shall be saved or damned: You have therefore no ground to infer from such texts, that in the great day our works of faith shall be rewarded with an eternal life of glory, and our bad works punished with eternal death.”

Ans.

ANSWER. Of all the paradoxes advanced by mistaken divines, your *assertion* is perhaps the greatest. You have no more ground for it, than I have for saying, that England is a lawless kingdom, and that all the promises of rewards, and threatnings of punishments, stamped with the authority of the legislative power, are no legal sanctions. If I seriously maintained, that the bestowing of public bounties upon the inventors of useful arts — that the discharge of some prisoners, and the condemnation of others, according to the statutes of the realm, are things which take place without any respect to law — that the acts of parliament are mere *descriptions* of persons, which the government *rewards*, *acquits*, or *punishes* without any respect to *worthiness*, *innocence*, or *demerit* — and that the judges absolve or condemn criminals merely out of *free grace* and *free wrath* — if I maintained a paradox so dishonourable to the government, and so contrary to common sense, would you not be astonished? And if I gave the name of *Papist* to all that did not receive my error as gospel, would you not recommend me to a dose of Dr. Monro's hellebore? — And are they much wiser, who fix the foul blot upon the divine government, and make the protestants believe, that the sanctions of the King of kings, and the judicial dictates of Him who judges the world in righteousness, are not laws and sentences, but *representations* and *descriptions*?

A comparison will shew the frivolousness of your objection: There is, if I mistake not, a statute that condemns an highwayman to be hanged, and allows a reward of forty pounds to the person that takes him. A counsellor observes, that this statute was undoubtedly made to deter people from going upon the highway, and to encourage the taking of robbers. Not so, says a lawyer from Geneva; tho' robbers are hanged *according to law*, yet the men that take them are not *legally* rewarded; the sum mentioned in the statute is given them of free, gratuitous, undeserved, unmerited, distinguishing grace. — Nay, says the counsellor,

counsellor, if they do not deserve the forty pounds more than other people, that sum might as well be bestowed upon the highwaymen themselves, as upon those who take them at the hazard of their life.—

“ And so it might, says the Geneva lawyer : for altho’ poor, blind legalists make people believe, that the promissory part of the law was made to excite people to exert themselves in the taking of robbers ; yet we know better at Geneva ; and I inform you, that the clause you speak of, is only a *description* of certain men, to whom the government designs the *reward* of forty pounds *gratis*.” The admirers of Geneva-logic clap their hands, and cry out, “ Well said ! down with *legality* ! ” but an English jury smiles and cries, “ Down with *absurdity* ! ” See IVth Check. p. 130.

II. OBJ. “ You confound our *title* to, with our *meetness* for heaven, two things which we carefully distinguish. Our *title* to heaven being solely what Christ has done and suffered for his people, has nothing to do with either our holiness or good works : but, our *meetness* for heaven supposes holiness, if not good works. Therefore, God’s unconverted sinful people, who have in Christ a complete *title* to heaven by right of ‘ *finished salvation*,’ SHALL all be made *meet* for heaven IN THE DAY OF HIS POWER.”

Ans. (1) I understand you, and so does Mr. Fulsome. You insinuate, that, till THE DAY you speak of comes, unconverted sinners, and backsliders may indulge themselves like the servant mentioned in the gospel, who said, *My master delayeth his coming, and began to drink with the drunken* ; but alas ! instead of “ a day of power,” he saw a day of vengeance, and his “ *finished salvation* ” (so called) ended in weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

(2) Your distinction is contrary to the *scriptures*, which represent ALL impenitent workers of iniquity as having a *full title to hell* according to both law and gospel ; so far are the oracles of God from supposing, that *some* workers of iniquity have a *full title to heaven*, absolutely independent on the obedience of faith.

(3) It

(3) It is contrary to *reason*; for reason dictates that whosoever has a full TITLE to a *punishment* or to a *reward*, is fully MEET for it. Where is the difference between saying, that a murderer *is fully meet for*, or that he *has a full title to* the gallows? If a palace richly furnished was bestowed upon the most righteous man in the kingdom, and you were the person; would it not be absurd to distinguish between your *title to*, and your *meetness for* that RECOMPENCE? Or, if the king, in consequence of a valuable consideration received from the prince, had promised a coronet to every swift runner in England, next to the prince's interposition and his majesty's promise, would not your running well be at once your *title to*, and *meetness for* that honour? And is not this the case, with respect to the incorruptible crowns reserved in heaven for those, who *so run that they may obtain*?

(4) Your distinction draws after it the most horrid consequences: for if a *full title* to heaven may be separated from a *meetness for* the *lowest* place in heaven, it necessarily follows: That Solomon had a *full title* to heaven when he worshipped Ashtaroath; and the incestuous Corinthian, when he defiled his father's bed; in flat opposition to the dictates of every man's conscience [if you except Mr. Fulsome and his fraternity.] It follows, that St. Paul told a gross untruth, when he said, *This ye know, that no idolater, and no unclean person, hath ANY inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*—In a word, it follows, that believers *sanctified with the blood of the covenant, who draw back to perdition*, [such as the Apostates mentioned, Heb. x. 29.] may have no title to heaven in all their sanctifying faith; while some impenitent murderers, like David and Manasses, have a perfect title to it in all their crimes and unbelief.

(5) This is not all: Our Lord's mark, *By their fruit ye shall know them*, is absolutely wrong if you are right: for your Distinction abolishes the grand characteristic of the children of God, and those of the devil, which consists in *not committing or committing*

ting iniquity, in doing or not doing righteousness, according to these plain words of St. John, He that committeth sin is of the devil—in this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever DOES NOT righteousness, is NOT of God, neither he that loveth not (much less he that murders) his brother, 1 John iii. 8, 10.—Thus the Lord's sacred enclosure is broken down, his sheepfold becomes a fold for goats, a dog-kennel, a swine-sty.—Nay, for what you know, all bloody adulterers may be *sheep in wolves cloathing*; while all those that have escaped the pollution that is in the world, may only be *wolves in sheep's cloathing*; it mattering not, with regard to the goodness of our title to heaven, whether *filthiness to Belial*, or *holiness to the Lord* be written upon our foreheads. O Sir, how much more dangerous is your scheme, than that of the primitive Babel-builders! They only brought on a confusion of the original language; but your doctrine confounds light and darkness, promises and threatenings, the heirs of heaven and those of hell, the seed of the woman and that of the serpent.

(6) As to your intimation, that holiness is secured by teaching, that God's People SHALL *absolutely be made willing* to forsake their sins, and to become righteous IN THE DAY OF GOD'S POWER, that so they may have a *meetness for*, as well as a *title to* heaven; it drags after it this horrid consequence: The devil's people "in the day of God's power," SHALL *absolutely be made willing* to forsake their righteousness, that they may have a *meetness for*, as well as a *title to* hell; a bitter reverse this of your "*sweet Gospel!*"

To conclude; If by your distinction you only want to insinuate, that Christ is the grand, and properly-meritorious procurer of our salvation, from first to last; and that the works of faith are only a secondary, instrumental, evidencing cause of our final salvation, you mean just as I do. But if you give the world to understand, that election to eternal glory is *unconditional*, or, which comes all to one,
that

that NO SIN can invalidate our title to heaven ; from the preceding observations it appears, that you deceive the simple, propagate the immoral species of the *Fulsomes*, make Christ the minister of sin, and inadvertently poison the church with the rankest antinomianism.

III. OBJ. " You call *the works of Christ* the PRIMARY, and properly-meritorious cause, and *our works of faith* the SECONDARY and instrumental cause of our eternal salvation. But, according to your doctrine, *our works* should be called the *first* cause, and *Christ's work* the *second* : for you make the final success of *Christ's work*, to depend upon *our work* ; which is manifestly setting our performances above those of the Redeemer."

ANSWER : (1) When a gardener affirms, that he shall have no crop unless he digs and sets his garden, does he manifestly set his work above that of the God of nature ? And when we say, that " we shall not reap *final* salvation, if we do not work out our salvation," do we exalt ourselves above the God of grace ?

(2) Whether our free-agency turns the scale for life or death, to all eternity Christ shall have the honour of having died to bestow an *initial life* of grace even upon those, who chuse death in the error of their ways, and to have made them gracious and sincere offers of an eternal life of glory. In this sense then, Christ's work cannot be rendered ineffectual ; it being his *absolute* decree, that the word of his grace shall be the favour of life to obedient *free-agents*, and the favour of death to the disobedient. Therefore, if we *will* not have the *eternal* benefit of his redeeming work, we cannot take from him the eternal honour of having shed his blood even for those, who tread it under foot, and who *bring upon themselves swift* DESTRUCTION by *denying the Lord that BOUGHT THEM*.

(3) Christ is not dishonoured by the doctrine, that represents the effect of the greater wheel, as being thus *in part* suspended upon the turning of the less. The light of the sun shines in vain for me, if I shut my

my eyes. *Life* is a far nobler gift than *food*: I can give my starving neighbour bread, but I cannot give him life: Nevertheless, the higher wheel stops, if the inferior is quite at a stand: he must die if he has no nourishment. Thus, by God's appointment, the preservation of all the first born of the Israelites in Egypt depended upon the sprinkling of a Lamb's blood; the life of all them that were bitten by the fiery serpents, was suspended on a look towards the brazen serpent; and that of Rahab and her friends hung, if I may so speak, on a scarlet thread. — Now, if God did not dishonour his wisdom, when he made the life of so many people to depend upon those seemingly insignificant *works*; and if he continues to make the life of all mankind depend upon *breathing*; is it reasonable to say, that he is dishonoured by his own doctrine, which suspends our *eternal* salvation upon the works of faith?

(4) Your objection can be retorted. Most Calvinists grant, that our justification in the day of conversion depends upon *believing*. Thus the Rev. Mr. Madan in his sermon on James ii. 24. p. 18, says, “ ‘Tho’ the Lord Jesus has merited our justification before God, yet we are not actually justified, till he is received into the heart by faith, and rested on,” &c. Therefore, in the day of conversion, that great minister being judge, our *justification* is suspended on the *work* which he calls “*receiving Christ*,” or “*resting on him* :” And how much more may our *eternal salvation* be suspended on faith and works, i. e. on *resting upon Christ*, and *working righteousness*!

(5) This is not all: both Mr. Madan and Mr. Hill call faith the *instrumental* CAUSE of our justification, and every body knows that the *effect* is always suspended on the CAUSE: Now, if so great an effect as a sinner's present justification may be suspended upon the *single* CAUSE of faith, why may not a believer's eternal justification be suspended upon the *double* CAUSE of *faith* and its *works*? In a word, why must Mr. Wesley be represented as heterodox for insinuat-

ing, that *believing* and *working instrumentally* CAUSE our *eternal justification* ; when Mr. Madan wears the badge of orthodoxy, altho' he insinuates, that *believing instrumentally* CAUSES our *justification* ?

If Mr. Madan says, that he allows *faith* to be an instrumental CAUSE, on account of its being the gift of God by which we receive *Christ* ; I answer, that we allow the *work* of *faith* to be an instrumental cause, because it springs from the spirit of *Christ*, and constitutes our likeness to *Christ*, and our evangelical righteousness ; a righteousness this, which *Christ* came into the world to promote. For God sending his Son, &c. condemned sin in the flesh, THAT the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit ; i. e. who walk in good works. — If it is asserted, that there can be but ONE *instrumental cause* of our salvation, that is, *faith* ; I appeal to reason, which dictates that christian faith implies a variety of causes, such as *preaching Christ*, and *hearing him preached* : for *faith* comes by *hearing*, and *hearing* by the *word* of God. This argument therefore, carries its own answer along with it.

(6) To conclude : Mr. Madan, in the above-quoted sermon, p. 16, says with great truth ; “ *Christ* and “ *faith* are not one and the same thing ; how then “ can we reconcile the apostle with himself, when he “ says in one place, *We are justified by Christ* ; and in “ another, we are *justified by faith* ? This can only “ be done by having recourse to the plain distinction, “ which the scriptures afford us, in considering *Christ* “ as the *meritorious cause*, and *faith* as the *instrumental* “ *cause*, or that by which the *meritorious cause* is ap- “ plied unto us, so that we are benefited thereby.” — Now all our heresy consists in applying Mr. M.'s judicious reasoning to *all* the scriptures, that guard the second gospel axiom, thus : ‘ How can we reconcile ‘ the apostle with himself, when he says in one place, ‘ *We are saved by Christ*, and in other places, *We are* ‘ *saved by faith*, we are *saved by hope* — *Work out your* ‘ *own salvation* — *Confession is made to salvation*, &c. for
‘ *Christ*

' Christ and *faith*, Christ and *hope*, Christ and *works*,
 ' Christ and *making confession* are not one and the
 ' same thing? This seeming inconsistency in St. Paul's
 ' doctrine vanishes by admitting a plain distinction,
 ' which the scriptures afford us: that is, 1. By con-
 ' sidering *Christ*, from first to last, as the properly-me-
 ' ritorious *cause* of our present and eternal salvation:
 ' 2. By considering *faith* as the *instrumental* CAUSE of
 ' our salvation from the guilt and pollution of sin on
 ' earth: And 3. by considering the works of faith,
 ' not only as the *evidencing* CAUSE of our justification
 ' in the great day, but also as an *instrumental* CAUSE
 ' of our *continuing* in the life of faith; just as eating,
 ' drinking, breathing, and such works, that *spring*
 ' *from* natural life, are instrumental causes of our *con-*
 ' *tinuing* in natural life.' Thus *faith*, and its *works*,
 are two inferior CAUSES, whereby the properly-meri-
 torious CAUSE is so completely applied to obedient,
 persevering believers, that they are now, and for ever
 shall be benefited by it. As I flatter myself that this
 sixfold answer satisfies the candid reader, I pass on to
 another plausible objection.

IV. OBJ. " Though you assert, that, from first to
 last, the works and sufferings of Christ are the grand,
 and properly-meritorious *cause* of our salvation; yet,
 according to your scheme, man having a life of glory
 upon his *choice*, and heaven upon *working out* his sal-
 vation, the honour of *free grace* is not secured. For,
 after all, *free will* and human faithfulness, or unfaith-
 fulness, turn the scale for eternal salvation or dam-
 nation."

ANS. (1) In the very nature of things we are free-
 agents, or the wise and righteous God would act in-
 consistently with his wisdom and equity in dispensing
rewards and punishments. If, thro' the *saving grace* of
 God which *has appeared to all men*, we were not again
 ' endowed with an awful power to *chuse life*, and to be
 faithful, it would be as injudicious to *punish* or *recom-*
 ' *pense* mankind, as to whip a dead horse for not mov-
 ing, damn fire for burning, or grant water an eternal

reward for its fluidity. (2) Were I ashamed of my moral free-agency, I should be ashamed of the noble power that distinguishes me from the brute creation. — I should be ashamed of the old testament, and of Moses, who says : *Behold, I call heaven and earth to record, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore CHUSE life.* — I should be ashamed of the new testament, and of Christ, who complains, *You WILL NOT come unto me that you might have life,* &c. You will not use the power, which my preventing grace has given you, that you might live here a life of faith and holiness, and be hereafter rewarded with a life of happiness and glory. — In a word, I should give up the second gospel-axiom, and tacitly reproach my Maker, who says ; *Why will ye die, O house of Israel ? for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth ; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.*

(3) To convince you, that *Free-agency*, and a right use of it, are by no means inconsistent with divine grace and genuine humility, I ask, Did not God endue our first parents with *free will* ? Are not even some rigid Calvinists ashamed to deny it ? If *free will* in man is a power *dishonourable* to God, did not our wise Creator mistake when he pronounced man *very good*, at the very time, man was a *free-willer* ? For, how could man be *very good*, if he had within him a power that *necessarily* militates against the honour of God, as the Calvinists insinuate *free-will* does ?

(4) I go one step farther and ask, Did God ever endue *one child of Adam* with power to avoid one sin ? — If you say, No : you contradict the scriptures, your own conscience, and the consciences of all mankind ; you fix the blot of folly on all the judges, who have *judicially* punished malefactors with death ; and, when you insinuate, that the Lawgiver of the universe will send all workers of iniquity personally into hell, for *not doing what is lawful and right to save their souls alive* ; or for not avoiding sin, when he never gave them the least power personally so to do ; you pour almost as much contempt upon his perfections, as if
you

you hinted, that he will one day raise all creeping insects, to judge them *according to their steps*, and to cast into a place of torment as many as did not move as swiftly as a race horse.

If you answer in the affirmative, and grant, that God has graciously endued *one* child of Adam with power to avoid *one* sin, so far you hold *free will* as well as Moses and Jesus Christ. Now if God has bestowed *free will* upon *one* child of Adam with respect to the avoiding of *one* sin; why not upon *two*, with respect to the avoiding of *two* sins? Why not upon *all*, with respect to the avoiding of *all* the sins, that are incompatible with the obedience of faith?

(5) Again, as it would be *absurd* to say, that God gave a power to avoid *one* sin, only to *one* child of Adam: so it would be *impious* to suppose, God gave him this power, that, in case he faithfully used it, he should *necessarily* boast of it. Pharisaic boasting is then by no means the *necessary* consequence of our moral liberty, or of a proper use of our *free-will*. Thus it appears, that your specious objection is founded upon an heap of paradoxes; and that to embrace *free-will* left we should not make enough of *free grace*, and to jump into *fatalism* lest we would be proud of our *free-will*, is not less absurd than to prostrate before a traitor lest we should not honour the king, and to run to an house of ill fame lest we should be proud of our chastity.

(6) Our doctrine secures the honour of *free grace* as well as calvinism. You will be convinced of it, if you consider the following articles of our creed with respect to *free grace*. (1) Before the fall, the *free grace* of our Creator gave us in Adam holiness, happiness, and a power to continue in both. — (2) Since the fall, the *free grace* of our Redeemer indulges us with a reprieve, an accepted time, a day of visitation and salvation; in a word, with a better covenant, and a *free gift*, that is *come upon all men unto* [initial] *justification of life*, Rom. v. 18. — (3) That nothing may be wanting on God's part, the *free grace* of our Sanctifier

tifier excites us to make a proper use of the free gift, part of which is *moral liberty*. — (4) Thus, even our *free-will* to good is all of creating, redeeming, and sanctifying grace : therefore, with regard to that glorious power, as well as to every other talent, we humbly ask with St. Paul, *What hast thou, that thou hast not received ?* — (5) This is not all : We are commanded to *account the long-suffering of God* [a degree of] SALVATION ; and so it is : for without forcing, or necessarily inclining our will, God's *providential free grace* disposes a thousand circumstances in such a manner, as to second the calls of the everlasting gospel. The gracious Preserver of men works daily a thousand wonders to keep us out of the grave, and out of hell : A thousand wheels have turned ten thousand times in and out of the church, to bring us the purest streams of gospel truth. Countless breathings of the *Spirit of grace* add virtue to those streams ; *free grace* therefore not only *prevents*, but also in numberless ways accompanies, follows, directs, encourages, and assists us in all the work of our salvation.

And yet, while God thus *works in us*, as the God of all grace, *both to will and to do of his good pleasure* ; that is, while he thus gives us the *faculty to will*, and the *power to do* ; and while he secretly by his spirit, and publicly by his ministers and providences, excites us to make a proper use of that *faculty* and *power* ; yet, as the God of wisdom, holiness, and justice, he leaves the *act* to our choice ; thus treating us as rational creatures, whom he intends wisely to *reward* or justly to *punish* ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS, and not according to *his own*.

Hence it appears, that we go every step of the way with our Calvinist brethren, while they exalt Christ and free grace in a rational and scriptural manner ; and that we refuse to follow them only when they set Christ at nought as a prophet, a lawgiver, a judge, and a king ; under pretence of extolling him as a priest ; or when they put *wanton free-grace*, and unrelenting *free-wrath*, in the place of the *genuine free-grace* testified of in the scriptures.

V. OBJ. "One more difficulty remains : If I freely obey the gospel and am *saved* ; and if my neighbour freely *disobeys* it, and is *damned*, what makes me to differ from him ? Is it not my free obedience of faith ?"

Ans. Undoubtedly : And his *free* disobedience makes *him* differ from *you* : or it would be very absurd JUDICIALLY to acquit and reward *you* rather than him, according to YOUR works. And it would be strange duplicity to condemn and punish *him* rather than *you* in a day of judgment, after the most solemn protestations, that equity and impartiality shall dictate the Judge's sentence.

As to the difficulty arising from St. Paul's question, 1 Cor. iv. 7, *Who maketh thee to differ?* to what I have said about it in the preceding sermon, p. 81, I add : (1) According to the covenant of works *all fall short of the glory of God* : and when any one asks, with respect to the law of innocence, *Who makes thee to differ?* the proper answer is, "*There is no difference : every mouth must be stopped : all the world is guilty before God — Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord.*" — But, according to the covenant of grace, he that *freely* believes and obeys in the strength of *free grace*, undoubtedly makes himself to differ from him, that by obstinate disobedience *does despite to the spirit of grace*. If this point is given up, the Diana and the Apollo or rather the Apollyon of the Antinomians [I mean wanton Free-grace and merciless Free-wrath] are set up for ever. However,

(2) If the question, *Who maketh thee to differ?* is asked with respect to the NUMBER of our talents, the proper answer is, "God's distinguishing grace alone maketh us to differ." And that this is the sense, which the apostle had in view, is evident from the context. He had before reproved the Corinthians for saying every one, *I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, &c.* and now he adds, *These things I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos, that ye might learn in us not to think [of gifted, popular men, or of yourselves] above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up*
up

up for one against another ; for who maketh thee to differ ? Why is thy person graceful ? and why art thou naturally an eloquent man like Apollos, whilst thy brother's speech is rude, and his bodily presence weak and contemptible like mine ? But,

(3) If you ask, *Who maketh thee to differ ?* with respect to the improvement or non-improvement of our gifts and graces : if you enquire, Whether God *necessitates* some to disbelieve, that they may *necessarily* sin and be damned ; while he *necessitates* others to believe, that they may *necessarily* work righteousness and be saved ; I utterly deny the last question, and in this sense St. Paul answers his own misapplied question thus. *Be not deceived : What a man* (not what God) *soweth, that shall he also reap, perdition* if he soweth to the flesh, and *eternal life* if he soweth to the spirit. Nor am I either afraid or ashamed to second him by saying upon the walls of Jerusalem, that in the last-mentioned sense, *We make OURSELVES to differ*. And scripture, reason, conscience, the divine perfections, and the trump of God, which will soon summon us to judgment, testify, that this reply stands as firm as one half of the bible, and the second gospel-axiom, on which it is immoveably founded.

Nay, there is not a promise or a threatening in the bible, that is not a proof of our *Lawgiver's* want of wisdom, or of our *Judge's* want of equity, if we are not graciously endued with a capacity to make ourselves differ from the obstinate violators of the law, and despisers of the gospel—that is, if we are not *free* agents. There is not an exhortation, a warning, or an entreaty in the sacred pages, that is not a demonstration of the pen-man's *jolly*, or of the *freedom* of our will. In a word, there is not a sinner justly *punished* in hell, or a believer wisely *rewarded* in heaven, that does not indirectly say to all the world of rationals : ‘ Though the God of grace *draws* thee to obedience ; yet it is with *the bands of a man*. For, after all, he *leaves* thee in the hand of thy counsel, to keep the commandments, and perform acceptable obedience IF

‘ THOU

' THOU WILT. *Before man is life and death, and whether him liketh, shall be given him.*' Eccles. xv. 14, &c.

But, altho' your obedience of faith makes you to differ from your condemned neighbour, you have no reason to reject the *first* gospel-axiom, and to indulge a *boasting* † contrary to faith and free grace : for your christian *Faith*, which is the root of your obedience, is peculiarly the GIFT of God ; whether you consider it as to its precious SEED (*the word nigh :*) as to its glorious OBJECT (*Christ and the truth :*) as to the MEANS, by which that object is revealed (such as *preaching and hearing :*) as to the OPPORTUNITIES and FACULTIES of using those means (such as *life, reason, &c.*) or as to the SPIRIT OF GRACE, whose assistance in this case is so important, that he is called the *spirit of faith*. — And yet that spirit does not act *irresistibly* ; all believers *unnecessarily* and *freely* yielding to it, and all unbelievers *unnecessarily* and *freely* resisting it : So far only does the matter turn upon
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† There is a twofold *glorying* ; the one pharisaic and contrary to faith ; of this St. Paul speaks, where he says, *BOASTING is excluded, &c. by the law of faith*, Rom. iii. 27. The other, evangelical and agreeable to faith ; since it is a believer's holy triumph in God, resulting from the testimony of a good conscience. Concerning it the apostle says, *Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing [BOASTING] in himself alone, and not in another*, Gal. vi. 4. [The word in the original is *Kauchesis* in one passage, and *Kauchema* in the other.] These seemingly contrary doctrines are highly consistent ; their opposition answering to that of the gospel-axioms. The first axiom allows of no glorying but in Christ, who has alone fulfilled the *law of works*, or the terms of the *first* covenant : But the second axiom allows obedient believers an humble *Kauchema*, upon their personally fulfilling the *law of faith*, or the gracious terms of the *second* covenant. 2 Cor. i. 12. This *Kauchema* answers to what St. Paul calls the *witness of our own spirit*, or *the testimony of a good conscience* ; which, next to the witness of the word and spirit concerning God's mercy and Christ's blood, is the ground of a christian's confidence. *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God, &c. because we keep his commandments*, 1 John, iii. 21, 22. And yet, astonishing ! this blessed *Kauchema*, so strongly recommended by St. Paul and St. John, who, one would think, knew something of the gospel, is now represented by some modern evangelists, as the quintessence of pharisaism !

free will. Thus it appears, that altho' the *act* of faith is *ours*, we are so much indebted to *free grace* for it, that believers can no more boast of being their own *saviours*, because they daily *believe* and *work* in order to their final salvation; than they can boast of being their own *preservers*, because they daily *breathe* and *eat* in order to their continued preservation.

On the other hand, altho' your condemned neighbour's disobedience makes him differ from you, he has no reason to reject the *second* gospel-axiom, and to exculpate himself by charging heaven with capricious partiality and horrid free-wrath; because God, whose mercy is over all his works, and who is no respecter of persons, graciously bestowed a talent of free grace upon him as well as upon you, according to one or another of the divine dispensations: For the royal master, mentioned in the gospel, gave a pound to the servant that buried it, as well as to him that gained ten pounds by occupying till his lord came.

“ But, upon that footing, what becomes of DISTINGUISHING GRACE ?” If by *distinguishing grace* you mean *calvinistic partiality*, I answer, It must undoubtedly sink together with its inseparable partner, *unconditional reprobation*, into the pit of error, whence they ascended to fill the church with contentions, and the world with infidels. But if you mean *SCRIPTURAL, distinguishing grace*, that is, the *manifold wisdom of God*, which makes him proceed gradually, and admit a pleasing variety in the works of grace, as well as in the productions of nature — if you mean his good pleasure to give the heathens one talent, the jews two, the papists three, the protestants four; or if you mean the different methods, which he uses to call sinners to repentance, such as his familiar expostulation with Cain — his wonderful warning of Lot's sons-in-law — His rousing king Saul by the voice of Samuel, and Saul of Tarsus by the voice of Christ; [Samuel and Christ coming, or seeming to come from the invisible world for that awful purpose] — His audibly inviting Judas and the rich ruler to follow him, promising the
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latter heavenly treasure, if he would give his earthly possessions to the poor — His shocking by preternatural earthquakes the consciences of the Philippian jailor, and the two malefactors that suffered with him — His awakening Ananias, Sapphira, and thousands more by the wonders of the day of Pentecost, when Lydia and others were called only in the common way — If you mean this, by DISTINGUISHING grace, we are agreed: for, grace displayed in as distinguishing a manner as it was towards Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida, greatly illustrates our Lord's doctrine: "Of him to whom little is given, little shall be required; but much shall be required of them, that have received much;" the equality of God's ways not consisting in giving to all men a like number of talents, any more than making them all archangels; but in treating them all equally, according to the various editions of the everlasting gospel, or law of liberty; and according to the good or bad uses they have made of their talents, whether they had few or many.

To return to your grand objection: You suppose (and this is probably the ground of your mistake) that when a deliverance, or a divine favour turns upon some thing, which we may do, or leave undone at our option, God is necessarily robbed of his glory. But a few queries will easily convince you of your mistake. When God had been merciful to Lot and his family, not looking back made all the difference between him and his wife; but does it follow, that he claimed the honour of his narrow escape? — Looking at the brazen type of Christ made some Israelites differ from others, that died of the bite of the fiery serpents; but is this a sufficient reason to conclude, that the healed men had not sense to distinguish between *primary* and *secondary* causes, and that they ascribed to their looks the glory due to God, for graciously contriving the means of their cure? — One of your neighbours has hanged, and another has poisoned himself; so that not hanging yourself, and taking wholesome food has so far made the difference between you and them: but
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can you reasonably infer, that you do not live by divine bounty, and that I rob the Preserver of men of his glory, when I affirm, that you shall surely die if you do not eat, or if you take poison ?

Permit me to make you sensible of your mistake by one more illustration. An anti-Calvinist, who observes that God has suspended many of his blessings upon industry, diligently plows, sows, and weeds his field. A fatalist over the way, lest free grace should not have all the glory of his crop, does not turn † one clod, and expects seed to drop from the clouds into furrows made by an invisible plow on a certain day, which he calls "a day of God's power." When harvest comes, the one has a crop of wheat, and the other a crop of weeds. Now, altho' industry alone has made the difference between the two fields ; who is most likely to give God the glory of a crop, the solifidian farmer who reaps thistles ? or the laborious husbandman, who has joined works to his faith in divine providence, and joyfully brings his sheaves home ; saying as St. Paul, By divine bounty I have planted and Apollos has weeded, but God has given the encrease which is all in all ?

† This is not spoken of *pious* Calvinists, for some of them are remarkably diligent in good works. They are *Solifidians* by halves — in principle, but not in practice. Their works outshine their errors. I lay nothing to their charge but inattention, prejudice, and glaring inconsistency. I compare them to diligent, good-natured druggists, who among many excellent remedies sell sometimes arsenic. They would not for the world take it themselves, or poison their neighbours ; but yet they freely retail it, and in so doing they are inadvertently the cause of much mischief. Mr. Fulsome, for example, could say which of our gospel ministers taught him, that good works are *dung*, and have nothing to do with eternal salvation. He could inform us, who lulled him asleep in his sins with the Syren-songs of "*unconditional election*," and "*finished salvation* in the full extent of the word ;" that is, he could let us know who gave him his killing dose : and numbers of deists could tell us, that a bare taste or smell of calvinism has made them loath the genuine doctrines of grace, just as tasting or smelling a *tainted* partridge has for ever turned some people's stomachs against partridge.

THIRD

THIRD PART.

Flattering myself, that the preceding answers have removed the reader's prejudices, or confirmed him in his attachment to genuine *free-grace*, which stands at an equal distance from *wantonness* and *free wrath*; I shall conclude this Essay by some reflections upon the pride, or prejudices of those who scruple working with an eye to the rewards, that God offers to promote the obedience of faith.

"If heaven [say such mistaken persons] if the enjoyment of God in glory, is the reward of obedience; and if you work with an eye to that reward, you act from *self*, the *basest* of all motives. Love, and not self-interest, sets *us*, true believers, upon action: We work from *gratitude*, † and not for profit; from *life*, † and not for life. To do good with an eye to a reward, tho' that reward should be a crown of life, is to act as a mercenary wretch, and not as a dutious child, or a faithful servant."

This specious error, zealously propagated by Molinos, Lady Guion, and her illustrious convert, archbishop Fenelon [tho' afterwards renounced by him] put a stop to a great revival of the power of godliness abroad in the last century; and it has already struck a fatal blow at the late revival in these kingdoms. I reverence and love many that contend for this sentiment; but, my regard for truth overbalancing my

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† The reader is desired to observe, that we recommend working from *life* and *gratitude* as well as our opponents. Life and thankfulness are *two* important springs of action, which we use as well as they. We maintain, that even those, who *have a name to live and are DEAD in trespasses and sins*, cannot be saved without *strengthening the things that remain, and are READY TO DIE*; and that *thankfulness* for being out of hell, and for having a day of salvation thro' Christ, should be strongly recommended to the chief of sinners. But thankfulness and life are not *all* the springs necessary, in our imperfect state, to move *all* the wheels of obedience; and we dare no more exclude *the other* springs, because we have these two; than we dare cut off three of our fingers, because we have a little finger and a thumb.

respect for them, I think it my duty to oppose their mistake, as a pernicious refinement of Satan transformed into an angel of light: I therefore attack it by the following arguments.

(1) This doctrine makes us *wise above what is written*. We read, that hunger, and want of bread, brought back the prodigal son. His father knew it, but instead of treating him as an hired servant, he entertained him as a beloved child.

(2) It sets aside at a stroke a considerable part of the bible, which consists in *threatenings* to deter evil-workers, and in *promises* to encourage obedient believers: For, if it is *base* to obey in order to obtain a *promised* reward, it is *baser* still to do it in order to avoid a *threatened* punishment. Thus the precious grace of *faith*, so far as it is exercised about divine *promises* and *threatenings*, is indirectly made void.

(3) It decries *godly fear*, a grand spring of action, and preservative of holiness in all free agents, that are in a state of probation; and by this means it indirectly charges God with want of wisdom, for putting that spring in the breast of innocent man in paradise, and for perpetually working upon it in his word and by his *Spirit*, whom St. Paul calls *the Spirit of bondage unto FEAR*; because he helps us to *believe* the threatenings denounced against the workers of iniquity, and to *fear* lest ruin shall overtake us, if we continue in our sins.

If ever there was a visible church without spot and wrinkle, it was when *the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and of one soul*. The worldly-mindedness of Ananias and Sapphira was the first blemish of the Christian, as Achan's covetousness had been of the Jewish Church on this side Jordan. God made an example of them as he had done of Achan, and St. Luke observes, that upon it, GREAT FEAR came upon ALL THE CHURCH; even such fear as kept them from *falling after the same example of unbelief*. Now were all the primitive christians mean-spirited people, because they were filled with *great fear* of being

being *punished* as the first backsliders if they apostatized? Is it a reproach to righteous Noah, that *Being moved with FEAR he prepared an ark for the SAVING of his house?* And did our Lord legalize the gospel, when he began to say to his disciples first of all, &c. *I say unto you, MY FRIENDS, be not afraid of them that kill the body, &c. but FEAR him, who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto YOU, fear him?* — Does this mean: Be mercenary: Yea, I say unto you, be mercenary?

(4) *Hope* has a particular, necessary reference to *promises*, and *good things* to come. Excellent things are spoken of that grace: If St. Paul says, *Ye are saved thro' FAITH*, he says also, *We are saved by HOPE*. Hence St. Peter observes, that “*exceeding great PROMISES are given unto us, that we might be partakers of the divine nature*: And St. John declares, *Every man, that has this HOPE in him, purifieth himself even as God is pure*. Now *hope* never stirs, but in order to obtain *good things* in view: a motive this, which our gospel-refiners represent as illiberal and base. Their scheme therefore, directly tends to ridicule and suppress the capital, christian grace, which *Faith* guards on the left hand, and *Charity* on the right.

(5) Their error springs from a false conclusion. Because it is mean to relieve a beggar with an eye to a reward from *him*, they infer, that it is mean to do a good work with an eye to a reward from God; not considering that a beggar *promises* nothing, and *can* give nothing valuable; whereas the Parent of good *promises*, and *can* give *eternal life* to them that obey him: Their inference is then just as absurd as the following argument: “I ought not to set my heart upon an
“*earthly, inferior, transitory good*; therefore I must
“*not set it upon the chief, heavenly, permanent*
“*good*.—It is foolish to shoot at a wrong mark, there-
“*fore I must not shoot at the right*; I must not aim
“*at the very mark, which God himself has set up*
“*for me ultimately to level all my actions at, next*

" to his own glory, viz. the enjoyment of himself,
 " the light of his countenance, the smiles of his open
 " face, which make the heaven of heavens."

(6) God says to Abraham, and in him to all believers, *I am thy exceeding great REWARD*: Hence it follows, that the higher we rise in holiness and obedience, the nearer we shall be admitted to the eternal throne; and the fuller enjoyment we shall have of our God and Saviour, our reward and Rewarder. Therefore, to overlook divine rewards, is to overlook God himself, who is *our great REWARD*; and to slight *the life to come, of which godliness has the PROMISE*.

(7) The error I oppose can be put in a still stronger light. Not to strive to obtain our *great reward* in full, amounts to saying: " Lord thou art beneath my
 " aim and pursuit: I can do without thee, or with-
 " out *so much* of thee. I will not bestir myself, and
 " do one thing to obtain either the fruition, or a ful-
 " ler enjoyment of thy adorable self." — An illustration or two, short as they fall of the thing illustrated, may help us to see the great impropriety of such a conduct. If the king offered to give all officers, who would distinguish themselves in the field, his hand to kiss, and a commission in the guards, that he might have them near his person; would not military gentlemen defeat the intention of this gracious offer, and betray a peculiar degree of indifference for his Majesty, if in the day of battle they would not strike one blow the more, on account of the royal promise?

Again: When David asked: What shall be done to him that killeth the giant? and when he was informed, that Saul would give him his daughter in marriage; would the young shepherd have shewed his regard for the princess, or respect for the monarch, if he had said: " I am above minding rewards: what I do, I do freely: I scorn acting from so base a motive as a desire to secure the hand of the princess, and the honour of being the king's son-in-law?" Could any thing have been ruder, and more haughty than such a speech? And yet, O see what evangelical refine-
 ments

ments have done for us ! We, who are infinitely less before God than David was before king Saul — we, worms of a day, are so blinded by prejudice, as to think it beneath us to mind the offers of the King of kings, or to strive for the rewards of the Lord of lords !

Wo to him that striveth in generosity with his Maker ! Let the potsherd strive thus with the potsherds of the earth : but let not the clay say to him that fashioeth it, ' What doest thou when thou stirrest me up to good works by the promise of thy rewards ? Surely, Lord, thou forgettest, that the nobleness of my mind, and my doctrine of finished salvation, make me above running for a reward, tho' it should be a life of glory, and Thyself. Whatever I do at thy command, I am determined not to demean myself ; I will do it as Araunah, like a king.' What depths of antinomian pride may be hid under the covering of our voluntary humility !

(8) The Calvinists of the last century, in their lucid intervals, saw the absolute necessity of working for heaven and heavenly rewards. We have a good, practical discourse of J. Bunyan upon these words, *So run that you may obtain*. The burden of it is, "*If you will have heaven you must run for it.*" Whence he calls his sermon, "*The heavenly footman.*" — And Matthew Mead, † a staunch Calvinist, in his treatise on *The*

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good

† As a proof of his being sound in the doctrines of Calvinistic grace and confusion, I present the reader with the following passage taken from the same book printed in London 1683—p. 307. "A believer is under the law for conduct, but not for judgment, &c. It is the guide of his path, but not the judge of his state. The believer is bound to obey it, but not to stand or fall by it" [That is, in plain english, He should obey, but his disobedience will never bring him under condemnation, and hinder him to stand in judgment] "It is a rule of life, &c. and therefore it obliges believers as much as others, tho' upon other motives, &c. For they are not to expect life or favour from it, nor fear the death and rigour that comes by it. The law has no power to justify a believer, or condemn him, and therefore can be no rule to try his state by." — In flat opposition

good of early obedience, p. 429, says with great truth :
 ' Maintain an holy, filial fear of God : This is an excellent preservative against apostacy, *By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil*, says Solomon ; and he tells you, *The fear of the Lord is the fountain of LIFE, whereby men depart from the snares of DEATH* ; and backsliding from Christ is one of the great snares of death. Think much of the day of recompense, and of the glorious reward of perseverance in that day : *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life*. It is not those that begin well, but those who end well, that receive the crown. It is not mercenary service to quicken ourselves to obedience by the hope of a recompence. *Omnis amor mercedis non est mercenarius*, &c. David said, *I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments*. He encouraged himself to duty by the hope of glory, &c. Hope of that glorious recompence is of great service to quicken us to perseverance. And to the same end does the apostle urge it : *Be unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*'

(9) When voluntary humility has made us wise above what is written by the apostles, and by our forefathers, it will make us look down with contempt from the top of our fancied orthodoxy upon the motives, by which the prophets took up their crosses, to serve God and their generation. When St. Paul enumerates the works of Moses, he traces them back to their noble principle, *faith* working by a well-ordered self-love [a love this, which is inseparable from the love of God and man ; the law of liberty binding us

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tion to the general tenor of the scriptures, thus summed up by St. John, *In this*, namely committing, or not committing sin, *the children of God ARE MANIFEST, and the children of the Devil*. What this author says is true, if it is understood of the *Adamic law of innocence* ; but if it is extended to St. Paul's *law of Christ*, and to St. James's *law of liberty*, it is one of the dangerous tenets that support the chair of the antinomian man of sin.

to love our neighbour *as ourselves*, and God *above ourselves*] *He chose*, says the apostle, *to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, &c.* But why? Because he was above looking at the prize? Just the reverse: because *he had respect to the recompence of reward*, Heb. xi. 26.

(10) In the next chapter, the apostle bids us take *Christ himself* for our pattern in the very thing, which our gospel-refiners call mercenary and base: *Looking to Jesus*, says he, *who, FOR THE JOY that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*: the noble reward this, with which his mediatorial obedience was crowned, as appears from these words, *He became OBEDIENT unto death*; WHEREFORE God also hath highly exalted him. If the scheme of those who refine the ancient gospel appears to me in a peculiarly-unfavourable light, it is when I see them impose upon the injudicious admirers of unscriptural humility, and make the simple believe, that they do God service when they indirectly represent Christ's obedience unto death as *imperfect*, and him as *mercenary*, actuated by a motive unworthy of a child of God. He says, *Every one that is PERFECT, shall be as his master*: but we [such is our consistency!] loudly decry perfection, and yet pretend to an higher degree of it than our Lord and Master: For he was not above *enduring the cross FOR THE JOY of sitting down at the right hand of the throne of God*: but we are so exquisitely *perfect*, that we will work *gratis*. It is mercenary, it is beneath us to work for glory!

(11) I fear, this contempt is by some indirectly poured upon the Lord of glory, to extol the spurious *free-grace* who is sister to *free-wrath*; and to persuade the simple, that "*Works have nothing to do with our final justification and eternal salvation before God*:" a dogma this, which is as contrary to reason, as it is to scripture and morality; it being a monstrous imposition upon the credulity of protestants, to assert, that works, which God himself will REWARD with
final

final justification and *eternal* salvation, have nothing to do with *that* justification and *that* salvation before Him : Just as if the *thing* rewarded had nothing to do with its *reward* before the *Rewarder* !

(12) The most rigid Calvinists allow, that St. Paul is truly evangelical ; but, which of the sacred writers ever spoke greater things of the rewardableness of works than he ? What can be plainer, what stronger than these words, which I must quote till they are minded : *Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, &c. knowing* [i. e. considering] *that of the Lord ye shall receive the REWARD of the inheritance. But he that doth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done : for there is no respect of persons, Col. iii. 23, &c. Again : Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap : for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap perdition ; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap everlasting life. Gal. vi. 7, 8.*

From those scriptures it is evident, that *doing* good or bad works is like *sowing* good or bad seed ; and that going to heaven or to hell, is like gathering what we have sown. Now, as it is the MADNESS of *unbelievers* to sow wickedness, and to expect a crop of happiness and glory ; so it is the WISDOM of *believers* to sow righteousness, expecting to *reap* in due time if they *faint not*. Nor do we act reasonably, if we do not *sow* more or less with an eye to *reaping* : for if *reaping* is quite out of the question with protestants, they may as wisely sow chaff on a fallow, as corn in a plowed field. Hence I conclude, that a believer may obey, and that, if he is *judicious*, he *will* obey looking both to Jesus and to the rewards of obedience ; and that the more he can fix the eye of his faith upon *his exceeding great reward*, and his *great recompence of reward*, the more he will abound in the work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labour of love.

(13) St. Paul's *conduct* with respect to rewards, was perfectly consistent with his *doctrine*. I have already observed, he wrote to the Corinthians, that he so *ran* and so *sought*, as to obtain an *incorruptible crown* ; and
it

it is well known, that in the Olympic games, to which he alludes, all *ran or fought* with an eye to a prize, a reward, or a crown. But in his epistle to the Philip-
pians, he goes still farther; for he represents his run-
ning for a crown of life, his *pressing after* rewards of
grace and glory, as the whole of his business. His
words are remarkable: *This ONE thing I DO: forget-
ting those things which are behind, and REACHING
FORTH unto those things which are before, I PRESS to-
wards the mark, FOR THE PRIZE of the high calling of
God in Christ Jesus.* And when he had just run his
race out, he wrote to Timothy, *I have finished my
course: henceforth there is laid up for me, as for a con-
queror, a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the
righteous JUDGE shall give me at that day* — the great
day of retribution. As for St. John, when he was
perfected in love, we find him as “mercenary” as St.
Paul: for he writes to the elect Lady, and to her be-
lieving children, *Look to yourselves, that we LOSE NOT
those things which WE HAVE WROUGHT, but that we
receive a FULL REWARD.*

(14) When I read such scriptures, I wonder at those,
who are so wrapt up in the pernicious notion, that we
ought not to work † for a life of glory; as to over-
look

† Truth is so great that it sometimes prevails over those, that are
prejudiced against it. I have observed that Dr. Crisp himself, in an
happy moment, bore a most noble testimony to undefiled religion.
Take another instance of it. In the volume of the Rev. Mr. White-
field's sermons taken in short hand, and published by Gurney, p. 119,
that great preacher says, “*First we must work FOR spiritual life,
“ afterwards FROM it.*” — And p. 153, 154, he declares: “*There
“ are numbers of poor, that are ready to perish; and if you drop
“ something to them in love, God will take care to repay you when
“ you come to judgement.*” I find but one fault with this doctrine.
The first of those propositions does not guard *free grace* so well as Mr.
Wesley's minutes do. We should always intimate, that there is no
working *for* a life of glory, or *for* a *more abundant life* of grace, but *from*
an initial life of grace, *freely* given us in Christ *BEFORE* any work-
ing of our own. This I mention, not to prejudice the reader against
Mr. Whitefield, but to show, that I am not so prejudiced in favour
of *works*, as not to see when even a Whitefield, in an unguarded ex-
pression, leans towards them to the disparagement of *free grace*.

look even the *crown of life*, with which God will reward those who are *faithful unto death*. And I am astonished at the remains of my own unbelief, which prevent my being always ravished with admiration at the thought of the rewards offered to fire my soul into seraphic obedience. An idle country-fellow, who runs at the wakes for a wretched prize, labours harder in his sportive race than, I fear, I do yet in some of my prayers and sermons. A sportsman, for the pitiful honour of coming in at the death of a fox, toils more than most professors do in the pursuit of their corruptions. How ought confusion to cover our faces ! Let those that refine the gospel, glory in their shame : let each of them say, “ I thank thee, O God, that I am
 “ not like a Papist, or like that Arminian, who looks
 “ at the rewards which thou hast promised : I deny
 “ myself, and take up my cross, without thinking of
 “ the joy and rewards set before me,” &c. For my part, I desire to humble myself before God, for having so long overlooked the *exceeding great reward*, and the *crown of life*, promised to them that OBEY him : and my thoughts shall be expressed in such words as these :

‘ Gracious Lord, if he that receiveth a prophet in the
 ‘ name of a prophet, shall have a prophet’s reward : if
 ‘ our light affliction, when it is patiently endured, work-
 ‘ eth for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of
 ‘ glory : if thou hast said, *Do good and lend, hoping for*
 ‘ *nothing again* [from man,] and your reward shall be
 ‘ great, and ye shall be the children of the highest : if
 ‘ thou animatest those, who are persecuted for right-
 ‘ eousness sake, by this promissory exhortation, *Re-*
 ‘ *joice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward*
 ‘ *in heaven* : Nay, if a cup of cold water only, given in
 ‘ thy name, shall in NO WISE lose its reward ; and if the
 ‘ least of thy rewards is a smile of approbation ; let
 ‘ me be ready to go round the world, shouldst thou
 ‘ call me to it, that I may obtain such a recompence.’

‘ Since thou hast so closely connected holiness and
 ‘ happiness, my duty and thy favours ; let no man be-
 ‘ guile me of my reward in a voluntary humility ; nor
 suffer:

' suffer me to be carried about with every wind of
 ' doctrine by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness,
 ' whereby they lie in wait to deceive. And whatsoever
 ' my hand findeth to do, help me to do it with all my
 ' might; not only lest I lose my reward, but also lest I
 ' have not a full reward; lest I lose a beam of the
 ' light of thy countenance, or a degree of that pecu-
 ' liar likeness and nearness to thee, with which thou
 ' wilt recompense those, who excel in virtue. So shall
 ' I equally avoid the delusion of the *pharisees*, who
 ' expect heaven thro' their *faithless* works; and the
 ' error of the *antinomians*, who hope to enter into thy
 ' glory without the passport of the *works of faith*.'

' And now, Lord, if thy servant has found favour
 ' in thy sight, permit him to urge another request :
 ' so far as thy wisdom, and the laws, by which thy
 ' free grace works upon free agents, will permit; in-
 ' cline the minds of papists and protestants to receive
 ' the truth as it is in Jesus. Let not especially this
 ' plain testimony borne to the many great promises
 ' which thou hast made, and to the astonishing RE-
 ' WARDS which thou offerest them that *work* righte-
 ' ousness, be rejected by my Calvinist brethren. Keep
 ' them from fighting against thy goodness, and des-
 ' pising their own mercies, under pretence of fighting
 ' against "*Arminian errors*," and despising "*Pelagian*
 ' "*Checks to the gospel*." And make them sensible, that
 ' it is absurd, to decry in word the Pope's pretensions
 ' to *infallibility*, if by an obstinate refusal to "review
 ' the whole affair," and to weigh their supposed or-
 ' thodoxy in the balances of reason and revelation,
 ' they *in fact* pretend to be *infallible* themselves; and
 ' thus, instead of one catholic pontiff, set up ten
 ' thousand protestant popes.'

' Thou knowest, Lord, that many of them love
 ' thee; and that, tho' they disgrace thy gospel by
 ' their doctrinal peculiarities, they adorn it by their
 ' godly conversation. O endue them with more love
 ' to their remonstrant brethren! Give them and me
 ' that charity which becometh not itself unseemly, which
 ' rejoiceth

' rejoiceth not in a favourite error, but rejoiceth in the
 ' truth, even when it is advanced by our opponents.
 ' Thou seest, that if they decry true holiness and good
 ' works as "dung and dross," it is chiefly for fear *thy*
 ' glory should be obscured by *our obedience*. Error
 ' transformed into an angel of light has deceived
 ' them, and they think to do thee service by propa-
 ' gating the deception. O gracious God, pardon
 ' them this wrong. They *do it ignorantly in unbelief*;
 ' therefore seal not up their mistake with the seal of
 ' thy wrath: Let them yet *know the truth*, and let the
 ' truth enlarge their hearts, and *make them free* from
 ' the notion, that thou art not *loving to every man* dur-
 ' ing the day of salvation; and that there is neither
 ' mercy nor Saviour for most of their neighbours,
 ' even during the *accepted time*.'

' Above all, Lord, if they cannot defend their mis-
 ' takes, either by argument or by scripture quoted
 ' according to the context, and the obvious tenour of
 ' thy sacred oracles; give them more *wisdom*, than
 ' to expose any longer the protestant religion, which
 ' they think to defend; and more *piety*, than to make
 ' the men of the world abhor thy gospel, and blas-
 ' pheme thy name, as free-thinkers are daily tempt-
 ' ed to do, when they see, that those, who pretend
 ' to "exalt thee" most, are of all protestants the most
 ' ready to disarm thy gospel of its sanctions; to turn
 ' thy judicial sentences into frivolous descriptions;
 ' to overlook the dictates of reason, and good nature;
 ' and to make the press groan under illogical asser-
 ' tions, and personal abuse!'

' Let thy servant speak once more: Thou knowest,
 ' O Lord, that, thy power being my helper, I would
 ' chuse to die rather than wilfully to depreciate that
 ' grace, that *free* grace of thine, which has so long
 ' kept me out of hell, and daily gives me sweet fore-
 ' tastes of heaven. And now, Lord, let not readers
 ' of a pharisaic turn, mistake what I have advanced
 ' in honour of the *works of faith*, and by that means
 ' build themselves up in their self-righteous delusion,
 ' and

‘ and destructive contempt of thy merits : Help them
 ‘ to consider, that if our *works* are *rewardable*, it is
 ‘ because thy *free grace* makes them so ; thy Father
 ‘ having mercifully accepted our persons for thy sake,
 ‘ thy holy spirit having gently helped our infirmities,
 ‘ thy precious blood having fully atoned for our sins
 ‘ and imperfections, thy incessant intercession still
 ‘ keeping the way to the throne of grace open for us,
 ‘ and our poor performances. Suffer not one of the
 ‘ sons of virtuous pride, into whose hands these sheets
 ‘ may fall, to forget that thou hast annexed the re-
 ‘ ward of the inheritance to the assemblage of the *works*
 ‘ of faith, or to patient continuance in well doing, and
 ‘ not to one or two splendid *works of hypocrisy*, done
 ‘ just to serve a worldly turn, or to bribe a disturbed
 ‘ clamorous conscience : And enable them so to feel
 ‘ the need of thy *pardon* for past transgressions, and of
 ‘ thy *power* for future obedience, that, as the chased
 ‘ hart panteth after the water-brooks, so their awak-
 ‘ ened souls may long after Christ, in whom the pe-
 ‘ nitent find inexhaustible springs of righteousness
 ‘ and strength ; and to whom, with thee, and thy
 ‘ eternal Spirit, be for ever ascribed *praise, honour,*
 ‘ and *glory* both in heaven and upon earth—PRAISE,
 ‘ for the wonders of *general redemption*, and for the
 ‘ innumerable displays of thy Free-grace unstained by
 ‘ Free-wrath — HONOUR, for bestowing the *gracious*
 ‘ reward of an heavenly salvation upon all believers,
 ‘ that make their election sure by *patient continuance*
 ‘ in well-DOING — and GLORY for inflicting the *just*
 ‘ punishment of infernal damnation upon all that ne-
 ‘ glect so great salvation, and to the end of the ac-
 ‘ cepted time dare thy vengeance by obstinate *conti-*
 ‘ nuance in ill-DOING.’

END OF THE SCRIPTURAL ESSAY.

N

APPEN-

A P P E N D I X.

Madeley, March 11, 1774.

YESTERDAY a friend lent me Mr. *Baxter's Confession of Faith*, printed in London 1655. The third part of this valuable book extends thro' above 140 large pages, and the title of that long section runs thus: *The testimony of reformed divines ascribing as much to WORKS as I: and many of them delivering the same doctrine.* He produces an hundred witnesses, some of whom are collective bodies, such as the *Assembly-divines*, the compilers of the Homilies of the Church of England, and even the Synod of Dort. As the antinomian spirit which flamed against Baxter's works in the last century, will probably sparkle against the preceding Essay, I beg leave to shelter behind that great man, and a few of his numerous quotations. I shall cite only Baxter's page, to which I refer those who desire to see the original of his Latin quotations, together with the books, chapters, and pages of the various authors.

Page 322, he quotes the following words from Bishop Davenant, 'As no man *receiveth* that general justification which dischargeth from the guilt of all *foregoing* sins, but on the concurrence of repentance, faith, a purpose of a new life, and other actions of the same kind; so no man *retaineth* a state free from guilt in respect of *following* sins, but by means of the same actions of believing in God, calling on God, mortifying the flesh, daily repenting and sorrowing for sins daily committed. The reason why all these are required on our part, is this: Because these cannot be still absent, but their opposites will be present, which are contrary to the nature of a justified man. — As therefore to the conservation

‘ conservation of natural life it is necessarily required, that a man carefully avoid fire, water, precipices, poisons, and other things destructive to the health of the body ; so to the conserving of spiritual life, it is necessarily required that a man avoid incredulity, impenitency, and other things that are destructive and contrary to the salvation of souls ; which cannot be avoided unless the opposite and contrary actions be exercised. And these actions do not conserve the life of grace properly and of themselves, by touching the very effect of conservation ; but improperly and by accident, by excluding and removing the cause of destruction.’

Page 324, Baxter produces these words of the same pious Bishop, ‘ We do therefore fight against, not the bare name of *merit*, in a harmless sense frequently used of old by the fathers, but the proud and false opinion of merit of *condignity*, brought lately by the Papists into the church of God.’

And again, page 325, ‘ The works of the regenerate have an ordination to the rewards of this life and that to come. 1. Because God hath freely promised (according to the good pleasure of his will) the rewards of this life and that to come, to the good works of the faithful and regenerate, 1 Tim. iv. 8. Gal. vi. 8. Mat. xx. 8.’

Page 328 he quotes the following passage from Dr. Twiss, ‘ It lieth on all elect to seek salvation, not only by faith, but by works also, in that without doubt salvation is to be given by way of reward, whereby God will reward not only our faith, but also all our good works.’

Page 330 and 331 he quotes Melancthon thus : ‘ New obedience is necessary by necessity of order of the cause and effect, also by necessity of duty or command, also by necessity of retaining faith, and avoiding punishments temporal and eternal.’—— ‘ Cordatus stirreth up against me the city, and also the neighbor countries, and also the court itself, because in explaining the controversie of justifica-

* tion I said, that new obedience was necessary to
* salvation.'

Page 360, 361, he quotes these words of Zanchius:
* Works are necessary: 1. To justify our faith [coram
* Deo] before God, &c. 2. They are necessary to the
* obtaining eternal life, &c. 3. They are necessary
* to inherit justification as CAUSES, &c. 4. They are
* profitable to conserve and increase faith: also to
* PROMERIT of God and obtain many good things
* both spiritual and corporal both in this life and in
* another.' The words of Zanchius are, '*Opera utilia
* sunt, &c. ad multa bona tum spiritualia tum corpora-
* lia, tum in hac vita tum in alia a Deo PROMERENDA
* et obtinenda.*' Zanch. Tom. 8, p. 787. loc: de just.
fidei. How much more tenderly did Mr. Wesley
speak of merit than the orthodox, whom Mr. Toplady
has lately rendered famous among us! I hope, that if
this gentleman ever opens his favourite book to the
above-quoted page, he will drop his prejudices, and
confess, that his dear Zanchius himself nobly contends
for the Wesseian "heresy."

Page 462, Baxter concludes his book by praying
for those, who had misrepresented him to the world,
and obliged him to spend so much time in vindicat-
ing his doctrine. I most heartily join him in the last
paragraph of his prayer, in which I beg the reader
would join us both. 'The Lord illuminate and
* send forth some messenger, that may acquaint the
* churches with that true, middle, reconciling method of
* theological verities, which must be the means of heal-
* ing our divisions. Let men be raised of greater suf-
* ficiency for this work, and of such blessed accom-
* plishments as shall be fit to cope with the power of
* prejudice: and let the fury of blind contradiction
* be so calmed, that TRUTH may have opportunity
* to do its work.'

End of the APPENDIX to the SCRIPTURAL ESSAY.

AN ESSAY

AN
 ESSAY ON TRUTH,
 BEING A
 RATIONAL VINDICATION
 Of the Doctrine of *Salvation by Faith*:
 WITH A
 DEDICATORY EPISTLE

To the Right Hon. the Countess of HUNTINGDON.

Without Faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. xi. 6. Whatsoever is not of Faith is sin, Rom. xiv. 23. Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone, (it is mere solifidianism.) James ii. 17. Good works spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith. XII. Art. In Christ Jesus, &c. nothing availeth but FAITH, which WORKETH by love. Gal. v. 6. He that believeth, and is baptized [baptism, the first and capital work of evangelical obedience, being here mentioned for all other good works, which we engage to do when we are baptized] shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned. Mark xvi. 16.

A DEDICATORY EPISTLE

To the Right Hon. the Countess of HUNTINGDON.

My LADY,

BECAUSE I think it my duty to defend the *works of faith* against the triumphant errors of the *Solidians*, some of your Ladyship's friends conclude, that I am an enemy to the doctrine of *salvation by faith*, and their conclusion amounts to such exclamations as these: How could a Lady, so zealous for God's glory and the Redeemer's grace, commit the superintendency of a seminary of pious learning to a man, that opposes the *fundamental* doctrine of protestantism! How could she put her sheep under the care of such a wolf in sheep's clothing! This conclusion, my Lady, has grieved me for your sake; and to remove the blot that it indirectly fixes upon you, as well as to balance my Scriptural Essay on the rewardableness of the works of faith, I publish, and humbly dedicate to your Ladyship, this last piece of my *EQUAL CHECK to pharisaism and antinomianism*. May the kindness, which enabled you to bear for years with the coarseness of my ministrations, incline you favourably to receive this little token of my unfeigned attachment to protestantism, and of my lasting respect for your Ladyship!

Your aversion to all that looks like controversy, can never make you think, that an *Equal Check* to the two grand delusions, which have crept into the church, is needless in our days. I flatter myself therefore, that tho' you may blame my *performance*, you will approve of my *design*. And indeed what true christian can be absolutely neuter in this controversy? If *God has a controversy* with all *pharisees* and *antinomians*, have not all God's children a controversy with *pharisaism* and *antinomianism*? Have you not for one, my Lady? Do you not check in private, what I attempt to check in public? Does not the religious world
know

know that you abhor, attack, and pursue *pharisaism* in its most artful disguises? And have I not frequently heard you express in the strongest terms your detestation of *antinomianism*, and lament the number of sleeping professors, whom that Delilah robs of their strength? Nor would you, I am persuaded, my Lady, have countenanced the opposition, which was made against the minutes, if your commendable, tho' (as it appears to me) at that time too precipitate zeal against *pharisaism*, had not prevented your seeing, that they contain the scripture truths, which are fittest to stop the rapid progress of *antinomianism*.

However, if you still think, my Lady, that I mistake with respect to the importance of those propositions; you know, I am not mistaken, when I declare before the world, that a *powerful, practical, actually-saving* faith, is the only faith, I ever heard your Ladyship recommend, as worthy to be contended for. And so long as you plead only for such a faith; so long as you abhor the winter-faith that saves the solifidians in their own conceit, while they commit adultery, murder, and incest, if they chuse to carry antinomianism to such a dreadful length; so long as you are afraid to maintain either directly or indirectly, that the *evidence* and *comfort* of justifying faith may indeed be suspended by sin; but that the *righteousness* of faith, and the *justification*, which it instrumentally procures, can never be lost, no not by the most enormous and complicated crimes; whatever diversity there may be between your Ladyship's sentiments and mine, it can never be fundamental. I preach salvation by a faith, that *actually* works by obedient love: and your Ladyship witnesses salvation by an *actually-operative* faith: nor can I, to this day, see any material difference between those phrases: for if I profess a faith that is *actually* operative, I cannot with propriety find fault with a faith that *actually* operates: I cannot with decency sacrifice its works to "antinomian dotages."†

Permit me also to observe, that the grand questions debated between my opponents and me, are not [as I fear

† The name which Flavel gives to Dr. Crisp's modish tenets.

fear your Ladyship apprehends] whether pharisaic merit shall eclipse the Redeemer's worthiness; or, whether the doctrine of salvation by a *lively* faith shall be given up to mere moralists: I no more plead either for the one or the other, than I do for placing the pretender upon the British throne, and for sacrificing the great charter to arbitrary power. No my Lady — What we contend about is: (1) Whether Christ's *law* is not perfectly consistent with his *blood*: (2) Whether we are to set him at nought as a PROPHET, a KING, and a JUDGE; under pretence of exalting him as a PRIEST, an ADVOCATE, and a SURETY of the *better covenant*, that threatens fallen believers with a *severer punishment* than that, which was inflicted upon the despisers of the Mosaic covenant: (3) Whether the evangelical *worthiness*, which a true believer *really* derives from Christ, is not absolutely necessary to ^{eternity} salvation: (4) Whether such a *worthiness* is not as consistent with Christ's original and paramount merit, as the light, that shines in your apartment, is consistent with the original and transcendent brightness of the sun: (5) Whether that faith is *living*, which evidences itself by gross immoralities: (6) Whether it is not rather the "*dead faith*" that St. James exclaims against: And (7) Whether the solidians do not set up *the abomination of desolation in the holy place*, when they directly or † INDIRECTLY teach, that all believers may go any length in sin without losing their heavenly thrones, or the divine favour: that a man can have the justifying, saving, operative faith, which your Ladyship pleads for, while he adds idolatry to incontinence, murder to adultery, and curses to the repeated denial of Jesus Christ: that fallen believers, who have returned to their sins *as a sow that is washed, does to her wallowing in the mire*, stand immaculate before God in a robe of imputed righteousness, even while they *turn God's*
grace

† Mr. H—ll has done it *directly* in the fourth of the five letters which he has inscribed to me, and all the Solidians do it *indirectly*.

grace into lasciviousness and commit all uncleanness with greediness: that they shall all infallibly sing in heaven, in consequence of their most grievous falls on earth; and that a kind of hypocritical, lying free-grace is to be preached to all sinners, which necessarily shuts up most of them under the absolute free-wrath of a God ever graceless, and ever merciless towards the majority of mankind.

Now, my Lady, as I am persuaded that you do not admire such an *immoral and narrow* gospel; as I believe, that, if at any time it creeps into your chapels, it is without your approbation, under the mask of decency, and only by the means of the specious phrases of *free gospel, electing, everlasting love, finished salvation*, and *free, distinguishing grace*, which, according to the analogy of the modish faith, SWEETLY make way for the inseparable and BITTER doctrines of a *confined gospel, of everlasting hate, reprobating unmercifulness, finished damnation*, and *free, distinguishing wrath*; and as I do your Ladyship the justice to acknowledge, that your most earnest desire is to support what appears to you a *free and holy* gospel at the expence of your fortune, life, and character; I beg, my Lady, you will also do me the justice to believe, that if I oppose the solifidian-gospel of the day, it is only because it appears to me a *confined and unholy* gospel, calculated to foster the antinomianism of Laodicean believers, and to render Christ's undefiled religion contemptible to the RATIONAL, and execrable to the MORAL world. If you grant me this request, I shall only trouble you with one more, which is to believe, that, notwithstanding the part I have taken in the present controversy, I remain with my former respect and devotedness,

My Lady,

Your Ladyship's

Most obliged and obedient

Madeley, March 12,
1774.

Servant in the Gospel,

J. FLETCHER,

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A N

ESSAY ON TRUTH, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

EXCEEDINGLY sorry should I be, if the testimony which I have borne to the necessity of *good* works, caused any of my readers to do the worst of *bad* works, that is, to neglect *believing*, and to depend upon some of the external, *faithless* performances, which conceited pharisees call "good works;" and by which they absurdly think to make amends for their sins, to purchase the Divine favour, to set aside God's mercy, and to supersede Christ's atoning blood. Therefore, lest some unwary souls, going from one extreme to the other, should so unfortunately avoid antinomianism, as to run upon the rocks, which are rendered famous by the destruction of the pharisees, I shall *once more* vindicate the fundamental, anti-pharisaic doctrine of *salvation by faith*: I say *once more*, because I have already done it in my guarded sermon: and to the scriptures, articles, and arguments produced in that piece, I shall now add rational, and yet scriptural observations, which, together with appeals to matter of fact, will, I hope, soften the prejudices of judicious moralists against the doctrine of faith, and reconcile considerate solifidians to the doctrine of works. In order to this, I design in general to prove, that true faith is the only plant, which can possibly bear good works; that it loses its operative nature, and dies when it produces them not; and that it as much surpasses good works in importance, as the motion of the heart does all other bodily motions. Enquire we first into the nature and ground of saving faith.

SEC.

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S E C T I O N I.

A plain definition of SAVING FAITH, how believing is the Gift of God, and whether it is in our power to believe.

WHAT is faith? It is ^{Only} ~~believing~~ ^{Confidently} ~~heartily~~. — What is *saving* faith? I dare not say, that it is “believing heartily, my sins are forgiven me for Christ’s sake;” for, if I live in sin, that belief is a *destructive* conceit, and not *saving* faith. Neither dare I say, that “*saving* faith is *only* a sure trust and confidence, that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me;” † for, if I did, I should damn almost all mankind for 4000 years. [See note 13, p. 43] Such definitions of *saving* faith are, I fear, too *narrow* to be just, and too *unguarded* to keep out solifidianism. A comparison may convince my readers of it. If they desired me to define *man*, and I said, “*Man* is a rational animal, that lives in France in the year 1774;” would they not ask me, whether I suppose, all the rational animals, that lived on this side the English channel in 1773 were *brutes*? And if you desired to know what I mean by *saving* faith, and I replied: It is a supernatural belief, that Christ has actually atoned for my sins upon the cross; would you not ask me, whether Abraham, the father of the faithful, who would have believed a lie if he had believed this, had only *damning* faith?

To

† When the church of England, and Mr. Wesley give us particular definitions of faith, it is plain, that they consider it according to the *christian* dispensation; the privileges of which must be principally insisted upon among christians; and that our church and Mr. Wesley guard faith against antinomianism, is evident from their maintaining, as well as St. Paul, that by bad works we lose a good conscience, and make shipwreck of the faith.

* To avoid therefore such mistakes ; to contradict no scriptures ; to put no black mark of DAMNATION upon any man, that in any nation fears God and works righteousness ; to leave no room for solifidianism ; and to present the reader with a definition of faith adequate to *the everlasting gospel*, I would chuse to say, that "justifying or saving faith is *believing* the saving truth *with the heart unto internal*, and [as we have opportunity] *unto external righteousness*, according to our light and dispensation." To St. Paul's words, Rom. x. 10, I add the epithets *internal* and *external*, in order to exclude, according to 1 John iii. 7, 8, the filthy imputation, under which fallen believers may, if we credit the antinomians, commit internal and external adultery, mental and bodily murder, without the least reasonable fear of endangering their faith, their interest in God's favour, and their inamissible title to a throne of glory.

But, "How is Faith the gift of God?"—Some persons think, that Faith is as much out of our power, as the lightening that shoots from a distant cloud : they suppose, that God drives sinners to the fountain of Christ's blood, as irresistibly as the infernal *Legion* drove the herd of swine into the sea of Galilee ; and that a man is as passive in the first act of faith, as Jonah was in the act of the fish, which cast him upon the shore. Hence, the *absurd* plea of many, who lay fast hold on the horns of the Devil's altar, UNBELIEF, and cry out, "We can no more believe, than we can make a world."

I call this an *absurd* plea for several reasons : (1) It supposes, that when God commands all men every where to repent, and to believe the gospel, he commands them to do what is as impossible to them as the making of a new world. — (2) It supposes, that the terms of the covenant of *grace* are much harder than the terms of the covenant of *works*. For the old covenant required only perfect human obedience : but the new covenant requires of us the work of an almighty God, i. e. *believing* ; a work this, which upon the scheme I oppose,

is as impossible to *us* as the creation of a world, in which we can never have an hand. — (3) It supposes, that the promise of salvation being suspended upon *believing*, a thing as impracticable to us as the making of a new world, we shall as infallibly be damned, if God does not believe in, or for us, as we should be, if we were to make a world on pain of damnation, and God would not make it in our place. — (4) It supposes, that believing is a work, which belongs to God alone: for no man in his senses can doubt but *creating a world*, or its tantamount, *believing*, is a work which none but God can manage. — (5) It supposes, that [if he, who *believeth not the divine record*, makes God a liar, and shall be damned] whenever unbelievers are called upon to believe, and God refuses them the power to do it, he as much forces them to make him a liar and to be damned, as the king would force me to give him the lie and to be hanged, if he put me in circumstances, where I could have no chance of avoiding that crime and punishment, but by submitting to the alternative of creating a world. — (6) It supposes, that when Christ *marveled at the unbelief* of the Jews, he shewed as little wisdom as I should, were I to marvel at a man for not creating three worlds as quickly as a believer can say the three creeds. — (7) That when Christ *reproved* his disciples for their unbelief, he acted more unreasonably, than if he had rebuked them for not adding a new star to every constellation in heaven. — (8) That to exhort people to *continue in the faith*, is to exhort them to something as difficult, as to continue creating worlds. — And lastly, that when Christ fixes our damnation upon *unbelief* [see Mark xvi. 16, and John iii. 18.] he acts far more tyrannically than the king would do, if he issued out a proclamation informing all his subjects, that whosoever shall not by such a time raise a new island within the British seas, shall be infallibly put to the most painful and lingering death.

Having thus exposed the erroneous sense, in which some people suppose, that *faith is the gift of God*; I

beg leave to mention in what sense it appears to me to be so. *Believing* is the gift of God's *grace*, as *cultivating* the root of a rare flower given you, or *raising* a crop of corn in your field, is the gift of God's *providence*.—*Believing* is the gift of the God of *GRACE*, as *breathing*, *moving*, and *eating*, are the gifts of the God of *NATURE*. He gives me lungs and air, that I may breathe; he gives me life and muscles, that I may move; he bestows upon me food and a mouth, that I may eat; and when I have no stomach, he gives me common sense to see, I must die or force myself to take some nourishment or some medicine: but he neither *breathes*, *moves*, nor *eats* for me; nay, when I think proper, I can accelerate my breathing, motion, and eating: and if I please I may even *fast*, *lie down*, or *hang myself*, and by that means put an end to my *eating*, *moving* and *breathing*.—Again, Faith is the gift of God to a believer, as the prince of Wales is the gift of God to the queen: She bore him herself by the blessing of God upon her *free* marriage with the king, and by the wonders of providence, which capacitated her *freely* to become a royal mother.—Once more, *Faith* is the gift of God to believers as *light* is to you. The Parent of good freely gives you the light of the sun, and organs proper to receive it: he places you in a world, where that light visits you daily: he apprizes you, that light is conducive to your safety, pleasure, and profit: and every thing around you bids you use your eyes and see: nevertheless you may not only drop your curtains, and extinguish your candle, but close your eyes also. This is exactly the case with regard to Faith. Free grace removes (in part) the total blindness which Adam's fall brought upon us: Free grace gently sends us some beams of truth, which is the light of *the sun of righteousness*; it disposes the eyes of our understanding to see those beams; it excites us various ways to welcome them; it blesses us with many, perhaps with all the means of faith, such as opportunities to hear, read, enquire; and power to consider, assent, consent, resolve

olve and re-resolve to believe the truth. But, after all, *believing* is as much our own act as *seeing*: We may in general do, suspend, or omit the *act* of faith; especially when that act is not yet become *habitual*, and when the glaring light, that *sometimes* accompanies the revelation of the truth, is abated. Nay, we may imitate Pharaoh, Judas, and all reprobates: we may do by the eye of our faith, what some report, Democritus did by his bodily eyes. Being tired of seeing the follies of mankind, to rid himself of that disagreeable sight he put his eyes out: We may be so averse from *the light, which enlightens every man that comes into the world*, we may so dread it because our works are evil, as to exemplify, like the pharisees, such awful declarations as these: *Their eyes have they closed, lest they should see, &c. — wherefore God gave them up to a reprobate mind, and they were blinded.*

When St. Paul says, that christians *believe according to the working of God's mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead*; he chiefly alludes to the resurrection of Christ, and the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost; the former of these wonders being the great object of the *christian* faith, and the latter displaying the great privilege of the *christian* dispensation. To suppose therefore, that no body savingly believes, who does not believe according to an *actual*, overwhelming display of God's almighty power, is as unscriptural as to maintain, that God's people no longer believe, than he actually repeats the wonders of Easter-day, and of the day of Pentecost. Is it not clear, that the apostle had no such notions, when he wrote to the Corinthians? *I declare unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you, which you have received, wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory — (if ye hold fast, as the original means) what I preached unto you, unless ye have BELIEVED in vain. For I declared unto you, &c. that Christ died for our sins, that he was buried, and that he rose again according to the scriptures, &c. so we preach, and so ye believed.* Again, how plain is

the account, that our Lord and his forerunner give us of faith and unbelief! *Verily we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness—What he (Christ) hath seen and heard, that he testifieth, and no man (comparatively) receiveth his testimony: but he that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true.* This is as intelligible as the following lines of the 22d hymn in the Rev. Mr. Madan's collection:

Ye need NOT ONE be left behind,
 For God hath bidden ALL mankind.
 Do not begin to make excuse:
 Ah! do not ye his grace refuse, &c.
 Ye who believe his record true,
 Shall sup with him and he with you;
 Come to the feast, be sav'd from sin,
 For Jesus waits to take you in.
 This is the time, no more delay,
 This is the glorious gospel-day;
 Come in *this moment* at his call,
 And live for him who died for all.

Two things have chiefly given room to our mistakes, respecting the *strange impossibility* of believing: The *first* is our confounding the truths, which characterize the several gospel-dispensations. We see, for example, that a poor besotted drunkard, an over-reaching greedy tradesman, a rich sceptical epicure, and a proud ambitious courtier, have no more taste for the *gospel of Christ*, than a horse and a mule have for the high-seasoned dishes that crown a royal table. An immense gulph is fixed between them, and the *christian* faith. In their present state they can no more believe *in Christ*, than an unborn infant can become a man without passing thro' infancy and youth. But, altho' they cannot yet believe *in Christ*, may they not believe *in God* according to the import of our Lord's words, *Ye believe IN GOD, believe also IN ME?* If the *pharisees* COULD NOT believe IN CHRIST, it was not because

because God never gave them a power equal to that which created the world ; but, because they were practical atheists, who actually rejected the *morning light* of the *jewish* dispensation, and by that means absolutely unfitted themselves for the *meridian light* of the *christian* dispensation. 'This is evident from our Lord's own words: *I know you, that ye have not the love of God, or a regard for God in you. I come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not, tho' you might do it ; for, if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can YE BELIEVE, who receive honour one of another ? &c. There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For, had ye believed MOSES, and submitted to his dispensation, ye would have believed ME, and submitted to my gospel. But if ye believe not HIS WRITINGS, how shall ye believe MY WORDS ?*

The *second* cause of our mistake about the impossibility of *believing now*, is the confounding of faith with its fruits and rewards ; which naturally leads us to think, that we cannot believe, or that our faith is vain, till those rewards and fruits appear. But is not this being ingenious to make the worst of things ? Had Abraham no faith in God's promise, till Isaac was born ? Was Sarah a damnable unbeliever, till she felt the long-expected fruit of her womb stir there ? Had the woman of Canaan no faith, till our Lord granted her request, and cried out, *O woman great is thy faith, let it be done unto thee even as thou wilt ?* Was the centurion an infidel, till Christ *marveled at his faith*, and declared, *he had not found such faith no not in Israel ?* Was Peter faithless, till his master said, *Blessed art thou Simon bar Jonah ? &c.* Did the weeping penitent begin to believe only when Christ said to her, *Go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee ?* And had the apostles no faith in the *promise of the Father*, till their heads were actually crowned with celestial fire ? Should we not distinguish between *our sealing the truth of our dispensation* with the seal of *our faith*, according to our present light and ability ; and between *God's sealing the truth of our faith* with the seal of his

power, or actually rewarding us by the grant of some eminent and uncommon blessing?—To believe is *our part*; to make *signs follow them that believe* is *God's part*; and because we can no more do *God's part* than we can make a world, is it agreeable either to scripture or reason to conclude, that doing *our part* is as difficult as creating a new heaven? Can you from Genesis to Revelation find one single instance of a soul willing to believe, and absolutely unable to do it? From these two scriptures, *Lord, encrease our faith*:—*Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief*, can you justly infer, that the praying disciples and the distressed father had no power to believe? Do not their words evidence just the contrary? That we cannot believe, any more than we can eat, without the help and power of God, is what we are all agreed upon; but, does this in the least prove, that the help and power, by which we believe, is as far out of the reach of willing souls, as the help and power to make a world?

Such scriptures as these, *unto you it is given to believe*—*A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven*—*No man can come unto me, except the Father draw him*—*Every good gift, and of course that of faith, cometh from the Father of lights*—Such scriptures, I say, secure indeed the honour of free grace, but do not destroy the power of free agency. To us, that freely *believe in a holy, righteous God, it is given freely to believe in a gracious bleeding Saviour*; because *the sick alone have need of a physician*; and none but those who believe in *God*, can see the need of an *ADVOCATE with him*: But ought we from thence to conclude, that our unbelieving neighbours are necessarily debarred from *believing in God*? When our Lord said to the unbelieving Jews, that they *could not believe in him*, did he not *speak of a moral impotency*—an impotency of their own making? I ask it again, If they obstinately resisted the light of their inferior dispensation; if they were none of *Christ's Jewish sheep*, how could they be his *Christian sheep*? If an obstinate boy sets himself against learning the letters,

letters, how can he ever learn to read? If a stubborn Jew stiffly opposes *the law of Moses*, how can he submit to *the law of Christ*? Is it not strange that some good people should leap into reprobation, rather than to admit so obvious a solution of this little difficulty!

Again, we receive all our ability and opportunity to believe from above; every kind invitation without, and every gracious motion within us, being the external and internal *drawings of the Father*: but does this prove, that because the Lord does his part, he *necessarily* does ours also, and works out our own salvation by doing the work of faith for us? Silk, gold, ingenuity to weave and cut out royal robes, are *the gift of God*, as well as money to purchase them, a right to wear them, and gentlemen to help the king to put them on; but how ridiculous should he make himself appear, if to give God all the glory of his robes, he assigned to the King of kings the paultry office of a weaver, a robe-maker, and a gentleman of the bed-chamber! Thus however do those exalt God, who represent believing as *his* work, in the antinomian sense of the word. From the above-mentioned texts we have then no more reason to infer, that God forces believers to believe, or that he believes for them, than to conclude that God constrains diligent tradesmen to get money, or gets it for them, because it is said, *We are not sufficient to THINK ANY thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God—who GIVES US ALL things richly to enjoy. — Remember the Lord thy God, for it is HE that GIVETH THEE power to get wealth.*

From the whole I conclude, that, so long as the *accepted time*, and *the day of salvation* continue, all sinners, who have not yet finally hardened themselves, may day and night [thro' the help and power of the general light of Christ's *saving grace*, mentioned John i. 9, and Tit. ii. 11.] receive *some* truth belonging to the *everlasting gospel*; (see note 8, p. 39) tho' it should be only this: "There is a God, who will call us to an account for our sins, and who spares us to break them off by repentance." And their cordial believing
of

of this truth, will make way for their receiving the higher truths, that stand between them and the top of the mysterious ladder of truth. I grant, it is impossible they should leap at once to the middle, much less to the highest round of that ladder; but if the foot of it is upon earth, in the very nature of things, the lowest step is within their reach, and by laying hold of it, they may go on *from faith to faith*, till they stand firm even in the *christian* faith; if distinguishing grace has elected them to hear the *christian* gospel. The most sudden conversions imply this gradual transition. As in the very nature of things, when *the spirit of the Lord* caught away Philip from the Eunuch, and transported him to Azotus, he made Philip's body rapidly measure all the distance between the wilderness of Gaza and Azotus: so, when he helped the Philippian jailor from the gates of hell to the gates of heaven in one night, he made him rapidly pass thro' the fear of God, the dread of his justice, and the pangs of penitential desires after salvation, before he entered into the joyous rest, that remains for those that heartily believe in Christ. Nor is this quick, tho' gradual, transition from midnight darkness to noon-day light, an unintelligible mystery; since we are witnesses of a similar event every revolving day. The vegetable and the animal world help us likewise to understand the nature of sudden conversions. Every philosopher knows, that a mushroom passes thro' almost as many stages of the vegetative life in six hours, as an oak does in two hundred; and those animalcula that frisk into life in the morning of a summer's day, propagate their species at noon, are old at four o'clock, and dead at six, measure the length of animal life as really, as Methuselah did in his millennium.

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SECTION II.

Saving Truth is the object of saving Faith: What TRUTH is, and what great things are spoken of it and of the WORD. Our salvation turns upon it.

IT appears by the preceding section, that *saving* TRUTH is the ground and object of *saving* FAITH: but, “What is TRUTH?”—This is the awful question, that Pilate once asked of him, who was best able to answer it. But alas! Pilate was so hurried by the lying fear of man, that he did not stay for an answer. May I venture to give one. — TRUTH is spiritual substance; and a LIE, spiritual shadow. TRUTH is spiritual light; and a LIE, spiritual darkness. TRUTH is the root of all *virtue*, and a LIE is the root of all *vice*. TRUTH is the celestial tincture, that makes spirits good; and a LIE, the infernal tincture, that makes them evil. A LIE is as nearly related to the Devil, as infection to one that has the plague, or opacity to the earth: and TRUTH is as nearly related to God, as fragrantcy to burning incense, and light to the unclouded sun.

According to this definition of TRUTH and ERROR, may we not give plain and scriptural answers to some of the deepest questions in the world?—What is God? The reverse of the *prince of darkness*, and of the *father of lies*: He is the *father of lights*, and the *God of Truth*: He is *Light*, and in him is no darkness at all.—What is Christ? He is the *brightness of his Father's glory*; a light; a great light to them that dwell in the shadow of death. He is the TRUTH; the TRUE Witness; the TRUTH ITSELF; Emmanuel, God with us, full of grace and TRUTH.—What is the Holy Ghost? The Spirit of TRUTH: Yea, says St. John, *The Spirit is TRUTH*, and leads into all TRUTH.—What is the Devil? The Spirit of ERROR, the multitude of LYING Spirits and their

their prince ; he that *abode not in the TRUTH* ; in whom there is no TRUTH, and who *deceives the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth.* Again,

What is the Gospel ? *The word of TRUTH, the word of God, the word of faith, the word of the kingdom, the word of life, and the word of salvation.* — What are Gospel-ministers ? Men that *bear witness to the TRUTH* ; that *rightly divide the word of TRUTH* ; that *are fellow-helpers to the TRUTH* ; that *speak forth the words of TRUTH* ; and *are valiant for the TRUTH upon the earth.* — What is the preaching of the Gospel ? *The manifestation of the TRUTH.* — What is it to believe the gospel ? It is to *receive the KNOWLEDGE of the TRUTH* ; to *receive the LOVE of the TRUTH* ; and to *obey the TRUTH.* — What is it to mistake the gospel ? It is to *err from the TRUTH* ; to *turn after fables* ; and to *give heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.* — What is the true Church ? *The pillar and ground of TRUTH, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.* — What is the first fruit of sincere repentance ? *The acknowledging of the TRUTH.* — What are believers ? Persons that are *chosen to salvation thro' the unneccessitated belief of the TRUTH* ; that *are of the TRUTH* ; that *know the TRUTH* ; that *have the TRUTH in their inward parts* ; that *have a good report of the TRUTH* ; in whom *dwells the TRUTH* ; who *have been taught the truth as it is in Jesus* ; in whom is the *TRUTH of Christ* ; who *have learned Christ* ; have *purified their souls by obeying the TRUTH* ; and *walk in the TRUTH.* — What are unstable souls ? People ever *learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the TRUTH*, with whom the *TRUTH of the gospel does not continue*, and who are *wilfully bewitched, that they should not obey the TRUTH.* — What are obstinate unbelievers ? Men of *corrupt minds, destitute of the TRUTH* ; *unreasonable men, that resist the TRUTH* ; that *glory and lie against the TRUTH* ; that *walk in darkness, and do not the TRUTH.* — What are apostates ? Men that *sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the TRUTH*, and, instead of repenting, *count the blood of the*
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the covenant, wherewith they WERE sanctified, an unholy thing. — What are perfect men in Christ? Men that are established in the present TRUTH, i. e. in the TRUTH revealed under the christian dispensation, and that can do nothing against the TRUTH, but for the TRUTH.

If all turns thus upon TRUTH, and if TRUTH is at once spiritual light, and the object of saving faith, it follows: (1) That to *walk in the TRUTH*, to *walk in the LIGHT*, and to *walk by FAITH*, are phrases of the same import: (2) That to be converted is to be *turned from darkness to LIGHT*, that is, from the practical belief of a lie to the practical belief of the TRUTH; or, as St. Paul expresses it, *from the power of Satan unto God*: And (3) That the chief business of the Tempter, is to *take the word of truth out of our hearts, lest we should believe and be saved*: or, in other terms, to *blind our minds, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto us.*

If Jesus Christ is the Truth, the Light, the Life, and the WORD, that *was in the beginning with God, and was God*; the WORD, by which all things were made, and are preserved — If he is the Light, that *shineth in darkness*, even when the darkness comprehendeth it not — If he is the true Light, which *lighteth every man, that cometh into the world*, while the day of salvation lasts — If he is the archetype, the eternal, living pattern of all saving Truth — If he is the essential, almighty WORD, from whom revealed Truth, and the Word of our salvation flow as constantly, as light and heat from the sun: do we not slight him, and despise eternal life; when we slight the TRUTH, and despise the WORD? And may not the great things spoken of the Word, confirm what has been said of the Truth, and help us to answer the questions already proposed in a manner equally scriptural and conclusive?

Not forgetting that there is such a thing as *the Word nigh, the Word behind us, the still small voice, and the word of that grace, which has appeared unto all men, teaching them to deny worldly lusts, and to live soberly, &c.* I ask: What are evangelists? Men, who
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bear record of the WORD of God, and bear witness of the LIGHT, that all men may believe: Sowers, that sow the WORD of the kingdom; holding forth the WORD of life. — What is the Devil? An enemy, who sows the tares of error in the night of ignorance, while men sleep in carnal security. — What are false Apostles? Men, that corrupt the WORD of God, that handle the WORD of God deceitfully, and preach another gospel; whose WORDS eat as does a canker — What are Believers? People, that hear the WORD of God and keep it; that are begotten of God by the WORD of Truth; that are born again by the WORD of God; that hear the SAYINGS of Christ, and do them; in whose hearts the WORD of Christ dwells richly; who receive it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the WORD of God, which worketh effectually in them that believe it: They are persons, that receive with meekness the engrafted WORD, which is able to save their souls; that have tasted the good WORD of God; that desire the sincere milk of the WORD, that they may grow thereby; that gladly receive the WORD; have God's WORD abiding in them; are made clean thro' the WORD, which Christ speaks, by his ministers, his scriptures, his spirit, his works, or his rod; and in whom the seed of that WORD produces thirty fold, sixty fold, or an hundred fold, according to their light, faithfulness, and opportunity.

Again, What are Unbelievers? Antinomian hypocrites, that hear the SAYINGS of Christ, and do them not; or pharisaic despisers, that stumble at the WORD, speak against those things, which are spoken by God's messengers; contradicting and blaspheming; and who, by putting the WORD of God from them, judge themselves unworthy of eternal life. — What are Martyrs? Witnesses of the truth, slain for the WORD of God. — And what are Apostates? Believers, in whom the WORD is choaked by the cares of this world, or the deceitfulness of riches; who fall away when persecution ariseth because of the WORD; by reason of whom the way of TRUTH is evil spoken of; and in whom the seed of the WORD becometh unfruitful. — Thus all turns still upon TRUTH and the WORD of God.

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S E C T I O N III.

That according to reason and scripture, there is a saving, almighty power in TRUTH, and the WORD of God.

SHOULD the reader ask here, how it is possible, the WORD and the TRUTH should be so nearly related to our Saviour, that to receive them is to receive Him, and to reject them is to reject Him, and his salvation : I answer, that, in the spiritual, as well as in the political and mercantile world, it is impossible to do business without some *signs* to convey our thoughts and resolutions. Hence the use of letters, notes, bonds and charters ; of revelations, traditions, scriptures, and sacraments. Now an honest man's *word* is as good as his *bond* or *pledge*, and as true as his *heart* ; his *word* or *bond* being nothing but his *mind* or determination, fairly conveyed to others by the means of his *tongue*, or of his *hand*. Therefore, in the very nature of things, to receive the *Word* of Christ, is to receive *Christ*, who dwells in our hearts BY FAITH ; whom believers *know now after the flesh no more* ; who commissioned his favourite apostle to say, *He that abideth in the DOCTRINE of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son* ; and who personally declares, *My mother and my brothers are these, that hear the WORD of God, and keep it.*

As the legislative power has appointed, that pure gold duly stamped, and bank-notes properly drawn up, shall represent the value, and procure the possession of all the necessities and conveniencies of life, which can be bought with money : So our heavenly Lawgiver has fixed, that the *Word of Truth* shall answer in his spiritual kingdom, the end of gold and letters of exchange in the kingdoms of this world : And this spiritual gold, this *Word* tried to the uttermost, he offers to all that are *poor and blind, and naked, that they*
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may be rich in faith. " I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayst be rich."

Again : as a *will* conveys an immense fortune ; and a *death-warrant*, a capital punishment : so does the *Word* of God convey the *unsearchable riches of Christ* to obedient believers, and the dreadful punishments of the damned to obstinate unbelievers. I readily grant that a *bank-note* is NOT *gold*, that a *will* is NOT an *estate*, and that a *death-warrant* is NOT the *gallows* ; nevertheless, so strong is the connexion between those seemingly insignificant *signs*, and the important *things*, which they signify ; that none but fools will throw away their bank-notes, or the wills of their friends, as waste-paper ; none but mad men will sport with their death-warrant as with a play-bill. Now if the written *word* of men [who, thro' forgetfulness, fickleness, impotence, or unfaithfulness, often break their engagements] can nevertheless have such force as *wills*, *bank-notes*, and *death-warrants* ; how excessively fool-hardy are sinners, that disregard the *WORD* of the King of kings, *who cannot lie !* the proclamations of the *God of Truth*, *with whom NO WORD is impossible !* the promises and threatnings, the will and testament of the Almighty, who says, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but MY WORD shall not pass away !*

Once more : Altho' *no man knows the Father immediately but the Son*, yet the Father may be mediately known by his *Works*, his *Word*, and his *Son*. For, [leaving room for the liberty of moral agents and their works] God's *Works* are always as his *Word* : Hence we read, *God SAID, Let there be light, and there WAS light : Cursed be the ground for man's sake, and the ground was cursed : For he SPAKE, and it WAS DONE ; he COMMANDED, and it STOOD FAST.* As God's *Works* are the *express image* of his *Word* uttered without—of his *out-going Word* (if I may so speak :) so his *out-going Word* is the *express image* of his *immanent, essential Word*, which is his eternal mind, and which the scriptures call indifferently *the Word*, *the Wisdom*, *the Son of God*, or the *express image* of his *Father's*

ther's glory. Hence it appears, that as the essential Word, Christ, is one with the Father ; so the word of saving Truth is one with the Son : and that David, Solomon and St. Paul spoke noble truths when they said : *Who so despiseth the word shall be destroyed — By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the ways of the destroyer. — The law, or word of the Lord is an undefiled word : it is sure and giveth wisdom to the simple : it is right and rejoiceth the heart, it is pure and giveth light : it is true and righteous altogether ; more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold ; — better to me than thousands of gold and silver ; — sweeter also than honey, and the honey comb : — It is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path : — by it is thy servant taught, and made wise to salvation, thro' faith on his part ; and in keeping of it there is great reward, even the reward of the inheritance, a kingdom of grace here, and a kingdom of glory hereafter.*

But let our Lord himself be heard, and he will join himself in mystic trinity to the *Word*, and to the *Truth* of God. He promiscuously uses the expressions *Truth* and *Word*, which make the burden of the last section. When he recommends his disciples to his Father, he says, *Sanctify them thro' thy TRUTH, thy WORD is TRUTH* : Hence it appears, that the *Truth* and the *Word* are terms of the same import ; that the *Word* of *Truth* is a sanctifying emanation from God, and the ordinary vehicle of the divine power ; and that our Lord uttered a rational mystery when he said, *He that receiveth you [the witnesses of my Truth, and the sowers of MY WORD] receiveth me ; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.* But, *Whosoever shall be ashamed of ME, and of MY WORDS, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father.* — And imperfect believers he encouraged thus : *If ye continue in my WORD, &c. ye shall know the TRUTH, and the TRUTH shall make you free, &c. If the SON shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* — Important scriptures these, which show the connexion of the *TRUTH* with the *SON* of God ! Blessed scriptures,

which St. Paul sums up in the following words ! *Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven ? (that is to bring CHRIST down from above) Or, Who shall descend into the deep ? (that is to bring up CHRIST again from the dead.) But what saith the righteousness which is of faith ? The WORD is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart : that is, the WORD of Truth, the WORD of faith, which we preach.*

Nor is this doctrine of the apostle contrary to what he says on another occasion : *The kingdom of God is not in WORD, but in POWER, i. e. true religion does not consist in fine talking, but in powerful believing and holy living : For what is more powerful than Truth ? " Truth is great, and will prevail : " Truth is the strongest thing in the world : It overturns the thrones of tyrants, and supports God's everlasting throne.*

Again, the word of man brings strange things to pass. Let but a general speak, and an army of Russians marches up thro' clouds of smoke, flames of fire, and volleys of iron balls, to form heaps of dead or dying bodies before the entrenchments of the Turks. An admiral gives the word of command, it may be only by hoisting a flag ; and a fleet is under sail ; artificial clouds and thunders are formed over the sea ; the billows seem to be mingled with fire ; and the king of terrors flies from deck to deck in his most dreadful and bloody forms.

If such is the power of the word of a man, who is but a worm ; how almighty must be the word of God ! — *By the WORD of the Lord were the heavens made, saith David : The worlds were framed by the WORD of God,* adds St. Paul, *and he upholdeth all things by the WORD of his power.* That word, no NECESSARY agents can resist. It rolls the planets with as much ease as hurricanes whirl the dust. If FREE agents can resist his WORD of COMMAND, it is only because he permits it for their trial. But, woe to them that resist it to the end of their day of probation : For they shall feel the RESISTLESS force of his WORD of PUNISHMENT : — *" Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."*
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And who is the God that shall break the adamantine, infernal chains, which that dreadful word will rivet upon them?

We read in the gospel, that our Lord *marvelled* at the centurion's faith, as greater faith than he had found in Israel. But wherein consisted the peculiar greatness of that man's faith? Is it not evident from the context, that it was in the noble and lively apprehension, which he had of the force and energy of Christ's word? Lord, said he, *I am a man under the authority of my colonel and general, and yet having soldiers under me, I say to one, Go; and he goeth: and to another, Come; and he cometh, &c.* Now Lord, if MY word has such power, what cannot THINE do? *Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.*

Why is Abraham called *The Father of the faithful*? Is it not because *judging him faithful and almighty, that had PROMISED, against hope he believed in hope, that he should become the father of many nations; according to that which was SPOKEN: So shall thy seed be?* Is it not because he staggered not at the promise, or word of God thro' unbelief; but was strong in faith; giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform; and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness? And shall not the like faith be imputed to us also, if we believe the saving truth revealed, or the divine record given under the present dispensation of the gospel: viz. that God raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification?

Oh! who can describe the needless perplexities of those wilful unbelievers, that have the truth of their dispensation clearly brought to them, and yet like Thomas resolutely set themselves against it, saying, *I will not believe?* And who can enumerate the blessings, which those childlike souls inherit, who, instead of quarreling with, cordially embrace the word of God; and set to their seal that God is true? They seal God's truth, and God seals their hearts: *Their faith*

is imputed to them for righteousness ; their faith saves them ; it is done to them according to their faith ; The God of hope fills them with all JOY and PEACE in believing. 'Thus, thro' faith, they not only subdue the kingdom of darkness, but inherit the present kingdom of God, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost received by the hearing of faith. Well-disposed reader, if thou doubtest the truth of those scriptures, try it by believing now what appears to thee to be the saving truth of thy dispensation : believe it with all thy present might, be it little or be it much : and, if in a little time thou dost not find thyself more settled and free, more able to fight against sin and to take up thy cross, let me bear the blame for ever.

Did the success of God's word depend *only* upon him, the truth would always operate in a saving manner. If men were not to *work out their own salvation* by freely repenting, believing, and obeying with the power to *will and to do*, which God gives them of his good pleasure ; all mankind would repent, believe, and obey as passively as clocks go, and as regularly as the sun rises. But, we are *moral* agents ; and works *morally* good depend as much upon the concurrence of God's free grace, and of *our* free obedience of faith, as the birth of the prince of Wales did upon the marriage of the King and Queen. Hence we read, *To whom swear he, that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not, &c. for the word preached did not profit them, not because the seed was bad, or because they had no power to receive it ?* [No such thing : for Moses, and after him Christ himself, marvelled BECAUSE of the unbelief of the chosen people] but, because the word preached was not mixed with faith in them that heard it. — Wherefore, says the apostle, to-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, &c. Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of UNBELIEF, &c. and exhort one another daily to believe.

The genuine seed of the word is then always good, always full of divine energy. If it does not spring up,

up, or if after it has sprung up, it does not *bring forth fruit to perfection*, it is entirely the fault of the ground. *The words that I speak*, says our Lord, tho' it should be only by the mouth of my servants, *they are spirit and they are life* to BELIEVING hearts — *Neither do I pray for these alone*, who have heard the word at MY mouth, *but for them that shall BELIEVE on me through THEIR WORD*. For Christ gave himself for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the WORD — IF it continue in the faith — holding fast the faithful WORD — the WORD of the truth of the gospel, which is come in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit since the day it is heard in faith; it being the grand office of the Spirit, to make the word of God, when it is mixed with faith on our part, *sharper than any two-edged sword*, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and to the discerning and destroying of the bad thoughts and intents of the heart.

Nothing therefore can be more certain than the connection between the power of God and the Truth of the gospel. — 'TRUTH [says a divine of the last century] 'is that eternal word of the Father, which 'in the Son, by the Holy Ghost is revealed to us, to 'be our guide back again to that bosom, whence it 'and we first came: It is that *Jacob's ladder*, let 'down to us from heaven to earth, whereby his angels (his messengers) lead up from earth to heaven: 'It is that *Rahab's scarlet thread*, let down from the 'window of heaven to wind us up by: The apostle 'calls it a *girdle*, the *girdle of TRUTH* — a girdle, that 'by many several links ending where it began, returning whence it first proceeded, clasps itself again 'in the bosom of the author, God.' According to that noble description of *Truth*, is it not evident, that all the *righteous power*, which works in the spiritual world, is the power of God and of *Truth*? and therefore, that our Lord answered like divine Wisdom manifest in the flesh, when he asserted, that *to Believe on Him, is to work the work of God* — that *he who believeth hath everlasting life* — that *tho' he were dead, yet shall*

shall he live — that *he that liveth and believeth on him* (which implies a continuance of the action) *shall never die* — that *rivers of living water* (streams of comfort and power) *shall flow out of his belly* (i. e. spring from his inmost soul) — and that *he shall do great works*; the GOSPEL being the POWER of God to salvation, to every one that BELIEVETH; and all things being possible to him that believeth, because, his faith apprehends the WORD, TRUTH and POWER of the ALMIGHTY.

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S E C T I O N IV.

There are various sorts of Truths. Idolatry and formality consist chiefly in putting INFERIOR in the room of SUPERIOR truths. Evangelical and moral i. e. religious truths alone change the heart.

WHEN I said that living Faith has SAVING truth for its object, I did not use the word *saving* without reason: for, as every stone is not *precious*, so every truth is not *saving*. There are then various sorts of Truths: “There is a sun,” is a *physical* or *natural* truth — “Our ideas of the sun are mental pictures of the sun,” is a *metaphysical* truth — “All the points of a circle are equally distant from the centre,” is a *mathematical* truth — “No just conclusion can be drawn from false premises,” is a *logical* truth — “Alexander conquered Persia,” is an *historical* truth — “There is a God — and this God is to be worshiped according to the different manifestations of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,” are two *religious* truths, the first of which belongs to *natural*, and the second to *revealed religion*. — “Every man is to love his neighbour as himself,” is a *moral* truth. — “A spiritual Jew is circumcised in heart, and a spiritual Christian is baptized with the spirit,” is an *evangelical* truth typified by the outward signs of circumcision and of baptism.

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When *natural* and inferior truths raise our minds to the God of *nature* and of *grace*, they answer their *spiritual* ends : But if they are put in the place of their archetypes and antitypes, *the truth of God is changed into a lie*. Take some instances of it : *The invisible things of God*, says St. Paul, *are understood by the things that are made*, or visible ; but, who considers the profound truth couched under his words ? Certainly not those heathens, who worship the *material*, instead of the *immaterial* sun : nor those Jews, who are regardless of the circumcision of the heart, and rest satisfied with an external circumcision : nor those papists, who pay divine honours to a bit of typical bread, which their fancy has turned into the identical body of our Lord : nor yet those protestants, who, being unmindful of the baptism of the Spirit, exert themselves only in sprinkling infants with, or dipping adults in material water : For they all equally forget, that *the letter of natural and typical things alone profiteth little, or nothing comparatively ; and that it killeth*, when it is opposed to *the spirit*, and made to supersede the invisible and heavenly ARCHETYPES, which *visible* and earthly things shadow out ; or when it causes us to set aside the precious ANTITYPES, which *typical* things point unto.

Thus thousands of sinners, like the rich glutton in the gospel, are spiritually, if not corporeally *killed* by meats and drinks, which should raise them to their invisible ARCHETYPES, the heavenly manna, and the wine of God's kingdom.—Thus, conjugal love, which should raise married persons to a more lively contemplation of the mystical union between the heavenly bridegroom and his faithful spouse, has a quite-contrary effect upon numbers : Absurdly resting in the fading type, they think that, “ *I have married a wife,* ” is a sufficient reason to give Christ a bill of divorce, or to show him the greatest indifference. — Thus also the Jews committed the *deadly* sins of idolatry, and murder, thro' their regard for the brazen serpent and the temple ; an extravagant regard this,
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which caused them to neglect, and at last to crucify Christ, the invaluable *ANTITYPE* of both the brazen serpent and of the temple.

Hence it appears, that the sin of *formalists* is not unlike that of *idolaters*. As God has blessed his church with various *forms* of worship, and *literal* manifestations of his truth, that they might lead us to the *power* of godliness, and to the truth *in the spirit* : So he has filled the natural world with a variety of creatures, which bear some signature of his own unseen excellencies. But alas ! if we are only *formal* and *letter-learned* professors, we absurdly set up our forms and the letter, against the power and spiritual operations, which they shadow out : And if we are idolaters, we *love and serve the creature more than the Creator*, who has given us the outlines of his invisible glories in the visible creation, that in and through every thing we *might feel after him, and find him*. Thus *formality* and *idolatry* equally defeat God's gracious designs towards mankind, the one by opposing *forms*, and the other by opposing *creatures* to God.

To return : All sorts of truths, if they are kept in their proper places, may improve the understanding ; but *religious* truths only have a direct tendency to improve the will, which is the spring of our tempers and actions : Therefore, *altho' I have all knowledge but that, which is productive of charity, I am nothing* ; the faith of God's elect being *ONLY* the cordial, practical *acknowledging of the TRUTH, which is AFTER GODLINESS*—of the saving *Truth, as it is in Jesus*.

A total inattention to every kind of truth makes a man *brutish*. An eager pursuit of natural, mathematical, logical, historical truths, &c. attended with a neglect of religious truths, tends to make a man an infidel : and this neglect grown up into an obstinate, practical opposition to moral, as well as to evangelical truths, turns him into an *enemy of a'l righteousness*, and a persecutor.

But, when *candor*, a degree of which we may have through the light that enlightens every man ;
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when *free-agency*, assisted by the spirit of power, that accompanies the word of truth — when *candor*, I say, and *free-agency* thus assisted, attend and submit to the RELIGIOUS truths revealed under our dispensation ; then the divine seed falls into good ground : Christ begins to be formed in our heart : and, according to our dispensation, we receive power to become sons of God : For we [even as many as receive with meekness the engrafted word] are all the children of God thro' faith in the light of the world—thro' faith in Christ Jesus, who is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe unto righteousness ; whether they do it with meridian light and intense fervour, as true Christians ; with morning-light and growing vigour, as pious Jews ; or only with dawning light and timorous sincerity, as converted heathens.

Some sorts of truths, like some kinds of food, are richer than others. Infants in grace must be fed with the plainest truths, which the apostle calls *milk* ; but stronger souls may feast upon what would give a surfeit to babes in Christ : For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those, who by reason of use have their spiritual senses exercised to discern both good and evil, truth and error, as quickly and as surely as our bodily senses distinguish sweet from bitter, and light from darkness. Truth is spiritual light ; too much of it might dazzle the weak eyes of our understanding. A parabolical blind is of great service in such a case. When the apostles were yet carnal, our Lord said to them, *I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now* : no not in parables. Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all evangelical truth. A sure proof this, that truth is the light, the food, the way of souls ; and that the grand business of the Spirit is to lead us into the Truth, as we can bear it, and as we chuse to walk in it.

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S E C T I O N V.

Truth cordially embraced by faith saves under every dispensation of divine grace, tho' in different degrees. A short view of the Truths that characterize the four grand dispensations of the everlasting gospel.

I Have hinted, that faith is more or less operative according to the *quality* of the truths which it embraces. This observation recommends itself to reason : For, as some wines are more generous, and some remedies more powerful ; so some truths are more reviving and sanctifying than others. But every evangelical truth, being a beam of the *Sun of righteousness* risen upon us *with healing in his wings*, is of a SAVING nature ; the SAVING grace of God, which has appeared unto all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness, &c. and to live soberly, &c. Thus I am saved from ATHEISM, by heartily believing, *there is a God, who will judge the world* : — from PHARISAISM, by firmly believing, that I am a miserable sinner, and that *without Christ I can do nothing* : — from SADDUCEISM, by truly believing, that the SPIRIT ITSELF helpeth my infirmities : — from ANTINOMIANISM, by cordially believing, that *God is not a Respector of persons, but a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, and a Punisher of all that presumptuously break his commandments ; — and from DESPAIR, by steadily believing, that *God is love*, that he sent his only begotten Son into the world to save that which was lost, and that I have an advocate with the Father *Jesus Christ the righteous*.

Hence it appears : (1) That every religious truth suitable to our present circumstances [when it is kindly presented by free grace, and affectionately embraced by prevented free-will] instantly forms, according to its degree, the saving, *operative* faith, that converts, transforms, and renews the soul. And (2) That this
faith

faith is more or less operative according to the *quality* of the truth presented to us ; according to the *power*, with which the spirit of grace impresses it upon our hearts ; and according to the *earnestness*, with which we receive, espouse, and welcome it to our inmost souls.

When God fixed *the bounds of the habitation of mankind*, he placed some nations in warm climates and fruitful countries, where the juice of the grape is plentiful next to water. And to others he assigned a barren, rocky soil covered with snow half the year : Water is their cordial, nor have they any more idea of their want of wine, than St. Peter had of his want of the blood of Christ, when he made the noble confession upon which the christian church is founded. Oh, says a predestinarian geographer, the God of providence has absolutely reprobated those " poor creatures." Not so, replies an unprejudiced philosopher ; they may be as healthy and as happy over their cup of cold water, as some of our men of fortune are over the bottles of Claret and Madeira that load their festive tables. And some of those " poor creatures," as you call them, may *come from the east and from the west, to drink the wine of the kingdom of God with Abraham, when the children of the kingdom shall be thrust out.*

What I have said of water and wine, may illustrate what the scriptures say of the truths peculiar to the gospel-dispensations. God forbid, that an *antichristian* zeal for the *christian* gospel should make me drive into the burning lake Christ's *sheep*, which are *big with young* : I mean the sincere worshipers, that wait like pious Melchisedec, devout Lydia, and charitable Cornelius, for brighter displays of gospel-grace : For, there are faithful souls, that follow their light under every dispensation, concerning whom our Lord kindly said, *Other sheep I have, which are not of this jewish and christian field. Them also I must bring into marvellous light, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.* Those feeble sheep, and tender lambs I must take into

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my bosom ; and to give them their portion of meat in due season, I venture upon the following remark.

If free-will prevented by free grace *ardently* receives the truths of the *christian* gospel, *christian* faith is conceived. If the heart fervently embraces the truths of the *jewish* or *gentile*-gospel ; [those which are peculiar to the christian gospel remaining as yet veiled] the *faith* of a *jew*, or of an *heathen* is begotten. Nevertheless if this faith, let it be ever so assaulted by doubts, impregnates the soul with truth, and works by love, it is saving in its degree.

I say *in its degree* ; for as there are in the earth various rich tinctures, some of which form diamonds, while others form only rubies, emeralds, or agates : so there are in the universal church of Christ, various tinctures of gospel-truth, which form various orders of spiritual jewels, as appears from such scriptures as these. *They that feared the Lord spake often one to another : and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.—For in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness is accepted of him according to the dispensation he is under, and the progress he has made in practical religion.*

This gospel, for example, “ *God hath made of one blood all nations of men, that they should seek the Lord as the gracious author of their being, and love one another as brothers* ” — this everlasting gospel, I say, has in all countries *leavened* the hearts of pious heathens with *sincerity and TRUTH*. This doctrine, “ *Messiah will come to point out clearly the way of salvation,* ” added to the gospel of the gentiles, has tintured with superior goodness the heart of all believing Jews. This truth, “ *Messiah is come in the flesh,* ” superadded to the *jewish* gospel, has enlarged the heart of all the disciples of John, or the *babes in Christ*. And these truths, “ *Christ died for my sins and rose again for my justification : He is ascended up on high : He has received the gift of the Spirit for men—for me. I believe on him by the power of that Spirit. He dwells in my heart by faith. He is* ”
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in me the hope of glory. The Promise of the Father is fulfilled: the kingdom of God, [righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost] is come with power:—these richer truths, I say, superadded to those, which are essential to the inferior dispensations, tincture the hearts of all *adult christians*, and make them more or less intimately one with Christ, according to the degree of their faith, and the influences of his spirit.

The field of Truth is as boundless as the divine perfections: and the treasures it contains, are as unsearchable as the riches of Christ. Here we may literally say, *Deep calleth unto deep—Canst thou by searching find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know?* These three capital Truths only, *God is—God is love—God is mine in Christ*, are more than sufficient to replace my soul in paradise. I know but little of them; and yet, thanks be to God! I know enough to make me anticipate heavenly bliss; nor is it the least part of my present happiness, to rejoice that there is an eternity before me to unfold the wonders of TRUTH, and to explore *the mystery of God*. *Now I see thro' a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known.*

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S E C T I O N VI.

Saving Faith is more particularly described by its rise and operations; and distinguished from the faith of trembling devils, immoral antinomians, penitents sold under sin, and modish professors, who believe without frame and feeling.

IF we assent to a religious truth, merely because we cannot resist its evidence—if we hate it; wanting to shake it off, wishing it were a lie, and fretting be-

cause we cannot make it so ; we have the faith of devils : for *devils believe and tremble* ; the force of the awful truths, which they cannot deny, giving them a foretaste of infernal torments. Of this sort, it seems, was the faith of Felix, when St. Paul *reasoned* before him *of justice, temperance, and judgment to come*. This alarming doctrine, supported by the suffrage of conscience, and impressed by *the Spirit of truth*, made the noble heathen *tremble* : but, soon recovering himself, he fought against the truth, that had laid hold of him unawares ; and he kept it at arm's length, till he could shake it off, as the apostle did the viper that fastened on his hand ; or, at least, till he could run away from it, by plunging as desperately into a sea of sensual delights, as the devils in the swine did into the sea of Galilee.

X The faith of immoral professors is not much better than the faith of Felix and Satan. They believe *some* glorious truths, but not with the heart to righteousness. Two or three comparisons may help us to understand this *mystery of iniquity*. When a person visits you, you may either receive him with cold civility, as a stranger ; or embrace him with warm affection, as a bosom-friend. From secret motives you may even show a peculiar regard to a man, whom you secretly despise or detest. He has a good voice, you love music, and he ministers to your amusement : Perhaps you want him to cloke the sin of his Bathsheba ; perhaps you are a party-man ; he is a proper tool for you ; and therefore you make much of him. But while your regard for him springs merely from such external circumstances, can it ever be personal and sincere ? Equally ungenerous however is the regard that Gallio and Fulsome have for the truth. Gallio holds fast the doctrine of general redemption, because he fondly supposes, that he has only to avoid robbery and murder to go to heaven : Fulsome extols “ everlasting love,”—but it is because he thinks, that it gives him the liberty of loving the world, without the least danger of losing God's eternal favour. He embraces
“ justification

"justification by faith alone;" but it is because he confounds *the works of faith* and *the works of the law*, and vainly hopes to be finally justified without either. He shouts "free grace" for ever, because it ensures, as he thinks, his eternal salvation, whatever length he may go in sin. He is a partial anatomist: he dissects the body of truth, throws away the vitals, and only preserves those parts, which seem to countenance his immoral scheme. I question if an Indian warrior is fonder of the scalp of an Englishman, than *Gallio* is of the doctrine of "God's mercy" separated from God's holiness and justice; or *Falsome*, of the doctrine of "Christ's merits," torn away from the evangelical worthiness of sincere obedience.

Nay, a judicious gnostick may admire and espouse a well-connected system of religious truth, just as a virtuoso admires and purchases a good collection of shells. The virtuoso contends for the beauty and rarity of his marine toys, with as much passionateness as if they were parts of himself: but they only lie upon cotton in his drawers, far enough from his breast: And the gnostick disputes for the truths he has taken a fancy to, with as much warmth as if they were incorporated with himself; but, he contrives that they shall pass like flying clouds over his understanding, without descending in fruitful showers upon his heart.

Truth is the wholesome food of souls: hence it is said, *The just shall live by his faith*, by his receiving Christ in the word of Truth, and by mystically feeding upon him, according to these deep words: *Except you eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye have no life in you*; or as St. John expresses it, *The TRUTH is not in you*. Now, as food must be inwardly taken, and properly digested, before it can nourish us; so must truth. If men therefore, who *buy the truth* in theory and *sell it* in practice, who *profess it in words* and *deny it in works*, have not power to take up their cross, and to follow Christ; we ought no more on that account to conclude, that the truth is inefficacious to our salva-

tion ; than to suppose, that good food is improper for our nourishment, because men, that spend their time in preparing it for others, in drawing up bills of fare, in placing dishes to the best advantage, and in inviting others to eat heartily, while they live upon trash themselves, have not strength to go through an hard day's work.

Again, from such scriptures as these, *I will HEAL their backslidings — HEAL my soul for I have sinned against thee — God shall send forth his MERCY and his TRUTH — he sent his WORD and HEALED them, &c* it is evident, that evangelical truth is, next to Christ, the MEDICINE as well as the food of souls. Now as it is absurd to suppose, that speculating upon a medicine, instead of taking it, can conduce to the recovery of our bodily health ; so it is unreasonable to fancy, that bare speculating upon the doctrines of the gospel, can be productive of saving health ; cordial believing having no less necessary a reference to truth, than real drinking to a potion. Hence appears the necessity of clearly distinguishing between saving faith and antinomian fancy :—between the faith, by which a man fervently believes with an humbled heart unto righteousness ; and its counterfeit, by which a man idly believes with a conceited brain to *practical* antinomianism, whether he be a follower of Mr. Wesley or of Mr. Romaine.

The soaring faith of an immoral antinomian is far inferior to the abortive faith of an imperfect penitent, and even to *doubting*. When truth and error present themselves to our mind together [as they always do in every *trial of faith*] so long as we remain in suspense between them, we continue in the uneasy state between faith and unbelief, which we call *doubting*. But when truth appears more *beautiful* than error to the eye of our *understanding*, without appearing *good* enough prevalently to engage our *affections* ; we are in the uncomfortable state of the carnal penitent, whom St. Paul describes in his own person, Rom. vii. We approve the revealed will of God, and *delight in his law after the inward man*. If the celestial rose were
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not beset with thorns, we would instantly gather it. If we had no bodily appetites to resist, no shameful cross to take up, no false wisdom to part with, we would heartily believe, and *work the work of God*: But we cannot yet give up our bosom-sin; carnal reason and the flesh prevail still against the spirit, tho' not without a struggle; unbelief and abortive faith (if I may use the expression) wrestling in our distracted breasts, as Esau and Jacob did in Rebecca's womb; and making us complain, *The good that I would do, if it cost me nothing, I do not: But the evil I would not, that I do*, because it gratifies my fallen nature. Thus *with his mind*, his rational powers, the carnal penitent *serves the law of God*, by good, tho' ineffectual resolutions; *but with his flesh*, his carnal appetites, he *serves the law of sin*, by bad, tho' lamented performances.

Here I beg leave to account for the famous confession of the princess, who cries out in Ovid: † *Video meliora proboque, — Deteriora sequor*; which may be thus paraphrased: 'I stand between the rough, steep, ascending path of virtue (*bonum honestum*;) and the plain flowry, downward road of vice (*bonum jucundum*.) Conscience says, that the one is far more commendable; passion declares, that the other is far more pleasing. I madly give the casting vote to hurrying passion: it decides, that the pleasure of a *present, certain* gratification, be it ever so sinful, overbalances the fear of a *future, uncertain* punishment, be it ever so terrible; and, notwithstanding the remonstrances of my conscience, I submit to the hazardous decision of my appetite; secretly hoping, that God does not regard my crimes, or that a day of retribution is a chimera.' ‡

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† I see what is right and approve it, but do what is wrong.

‡ Had Medea been acquainted with what passes for "Gospel" in our days, she might have added to her delusive dreams, the horrid hope of "singing louder to all eternity in heaven for her grievous falls." But, tho' she was an heathen, and a lewd, bloody witch, I believe, that she would have disapproved the indecent, exorbitant height, to which some of our gospel-preachers carry antinomianism.

To return : Faith does not struggle into birth without her coeval child and constant partner, *Hope*. When Faith fails, despair groans, *O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me ?* But when faith revives, hope lifts up her head, and cries, *I thank God*, there is deliverance thro' *Jesus Christ our Lord*. Thus we go on falling and rising, conceiving and miscarrying, dying and reviving, till we are quite tired of the sins, which hinder us from welcoming the saving truth with a more cordial embrace ; and when we do this, our faith is unfeigned ; the Lord sets to it the broad seal of his power ; it proves victorious ; we enter into gospel-liberty, and instead of the old note, *Who shall deliver me ?* we sing, [under the christian dispensation] *Christ hath delivered us from the curse of the law of sin*, as well as from the curse of the law of innocence, and of the ceremonial law. *There is no condemnation to them that believe*, and *WALK not after the flesh, but after the spirit*.

* The manner, in which this deliverance is generally wrought, may be more particularly described thus. Free grace, at sundry times and in divers manners, speaks to our consciences ; recommending and enforcing the word nigh, the commandment that is everlasting life, the Truth that contains the regenerating power of God. If it is the day of provocation, we unnecessarily begin to make excuse : We CANNOT come to the marriage feast : We are either too good, too bad, or too busy to entertain the Truth ; and we say as civilly as Felix, *Go thy way for this time, when I shall be sitter, or when I shall have a more convenient season, I will call for thee*. Perhaps we perversely harden our hearts, contradicting, blaspheming, and saying as the pharisees, *We will not have this Truth to reign over us : away with it !* But if it is the day of conversion, if our free-willing soul knows the time of her visitation ; humbly bowing at the word of the Lord, and saying as the Virgin Mary, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy word* ; I am a lost sinner, but there is mercy with thee that thou mayst be feared : then the seed of the kingdom, the word of God, is received in an honest

honest and good heart; for nothing is wanting to render the heart initially good and honest, but the sincere submission of our free will to that free grace, which courts us and says: *Behold! I stand at the door of every heart and knock: if ANY MAN hear my voice and open, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me: He shall taste how good the Lord is, he shall taste the good word of God, and the powers of truth, which are the powers of the world to come: and so shall he rise superior to shadows and lies, which are the powers of this present evil world.*

Thus opens the kingdom of God in the believing soul: thus is Christ, *the truth, and the life*, formed in the heart by faith: Thus grace begins to REIGN thro' righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ: — Thus the little *leaven of sincerity and truth* prevalently leavens the whole soul with righteousness and true holiness: Thus, after hard labour, the soul, impregnated by truth, brings forth thro' grace the living, saving, operative faith, that actually overcomes the world.

I call that faith *saving* and OPERATIVE, because, so long as it lives, it *saves*; and so long as it saves, it WORKS righteousness—it WORKS by a righteous fear of the evil denounced against sin; by a righteous opposition to every known sin; by a righteous hope of the good promised to obedience; and by a righteous love of the truth that has produced it, and of the Father of lights from whom that truth proceeds; it being scarcely possible to welcome heartily a beam of the sun for its brightness, without *indirectly* welcoming the sun itself. Therefore, when living faith ceases to *work*, it dies away, as the heart that ceases to beat; it goes out, as a candle that ceases to shine.

“ But, upon this footing, what becomes of the
“ *modish doctrine of a faith without frame and feel-*
“ *ing.*” — If the ministers, who recommend such a
faith, mean that we must set our heart, as a seal, to
the gospel truths adapted to our present state, and
stamp them with all our might; not considering whe-
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ther our *fallen* nature and *carnal* reason relish them, and steadily following the poet's direction :

Tu ne cede malis ; sed contra audentior ito,
Quàm mala te natura finit :

they maintain a truth, a great truth, which cannot be too much urged upon tempted, desponding, and despairing souls. — But if they mean, that we must believe ourselves unconditionally elected to glory, be the *frame* of our minds ever so carnal, and the *feelings* of our hearts ever so worldly, they destroy *the health of the daughter of God's people*, with as rank poison as ever grew in spiritual Egypt. I am no judge of what passes in the breast of those gentlemen ; but, for my part, I never *FEEL faith* more strongly at work, than when I wrestle not only with flesh and blood, but with the banded powers of darkness.

None but a dead, mouldered man is quite destitute of “ frame and feeling : ” It is not a *real* flame that neither warms in winter, nor shines in the dark. The moment a light is not, in its degree, able to triumph over darkness, and even to turn it into light, it ceases to be a *true* light. You may see in Windsor-castle a candle most exquisitely painted ; it *shines* as steadfastly as Mr. Fulsome *believes*. Was the coloured canvas as loquacious as that antinomian hero, it might say, “ I shine without feeling, tho' not without a frame ; ” but even then, Mr. Fulsome's faith would have the pre-eminence ; for, if we credit him, it shines, without either “ frame or feeling.” How absurd is solifidianism ! how dangerous ! if any man can shew me a true light, that *actually* emits no beams, I will repent of the ridicule I cast upon the dotages, which make way for a “ justifying faith ” that works by adultery and murder ; an ill-smelling candle this, which burns in the breasts of apostates, to the honour of him, that kindled it at the fire of tophet — an infernal candle, sending forth darkness instead of light, and so far benighting the good men, who follow it, that they look
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upon it as the inextinguishable *candle of the Lord*, and upon "sincere obedience" as a "*jack-o' lanthorn*."

The preceding pages represent Truth as the remedy and nourishment of our souls, and I have already observed, that, as we cannot take food without the continual help of the God of nature; so we cannot receive the truth without the continual assistance of the God of grace; it being the first axiom of the gospel, that all our sufficiency and ability to do any good are of God; nevertheless, lest those, who seek occasion against the truth, which they do not relish, should call the *free grace*, I hold forth, *pelagianism*; I shall conclude this section by asserting, that if Christ were not *the Saviour of all men*, and if we were entirely destitute of the gracious, evangelical *light, that enlightens every man, and helps our infirmities*, we should be, with respect to saving truths, like people, who either have no kind of food, or no stomach at all to their food; nay, like sick people, that have an *insurmountable aversion to a medicine*, and an *irresistible longing for poison*. But, *the saving grace of God having appeared to all men*, and having mercifully given us an evangelical capacity to receive the truth, as it is revealed to us in the dispensation we are under; we may either *put that truth from us*, as the unbelieving Jews did, or welcome it as Job and his friends; altho' not without difficulty — Yea, such difficulty as forms *the trial of our faith*, and makes it reasonable in God, to bid us *chuse life* rather than death, when truth and error, blessing and cursing are set before us.

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S E C T I O N VII.

The operative belief of the truth, and the operative belief of a lie, are the two roots that produce all our GOOD and all our BAD actions. An appeal to reason and matter of fact. Our internal and [when we do not play the hypocrites] our external works are always exactly like our faith; our actions being as much produced by our faith, as our pulses are by the beating of our heart.

NO plant can grow without its root, and no moral action can spring into existence without its principle. When we do not dissemble, our principle of action is our *prevalent persuasion* — our *predominant belief*; a cordial, practical *belief of the truth* and rejection of a lie, being always the principle of a *good* action; and a cordial, practical *belief of a lie* and rejection of the truth, being always the principle of a *bad* action.

That *good* works can have no origin but the *belief of the truth*, will appear indubitable, if we trace them back to their source. To *fear, love, and obey* God, are undoubtedly *GOOD* works; but can I do them, without BELIEVING the TRUTH — i. e. without believing that *God is*, that *he is to be feared, loved, and obeyed*; and that it is my duty or privilege so to do? Again, that *bad* works can have no other origin but the *belief of a lie*, will also appear evident, if we follow them to their spring. To *neglect and disobey* God are certainly *BAD* works; but can we do them without *believing a lie*? Without being more or less persuaded, that, altho' it may not be our duty, yet upon the whole, in our present circumstances, it will be for our advantage or credit, to *neglect* God, and to swim with the stream?

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May not the preceding argument concerning the *importance of faith*, be confirmed by appeals to reason, experience, and matter of fact? Did not Eve stand in paradise, so long as she forbore eating of the forbidden fruit? Did she not forbear eating, so long as she *believed* the truth — i. e. so long as she believed, she should die if she ate of that fruit? Would she have sinned, if she had not first believed a lie, yea, swallowed down a cluster of lies? ‘She should not die — the fruit was as good as it was fair — it was to be desired to make one wise — she should be as God, &c.’ — Was it not those untruths, freely entertained in her heart, that made her commit the direful deed?

‘Why did Judas once forsake all to follow the indigent Jesus? Was it not because he *believed* it his real advantage so to do? And did he not, so far, believe the *truth*, and show his faith by corresponding works? By and by the spirit of error suggested, that he should be a loser by following, and a gainer by betraying his master? Was not this an infamous *lie*? When he had believed it, did not his heart become a nest for the old Serpent, a throne for the father of lies? And did not our Lord speak the words of soberness and truth, when he said to his disciples, *One of you hath a devil*?’

Why did Peter deny his dear Lord? Undoubtedly because in that fatal hour he *believed*, that the Jews were more able and ready to fall upon and destroy him, than Christ was to save and defend him. And was not this believing an untruth? When he had completed his crime, why did he go out to weep, and not to hang himself like Judas? Was it not because he admitted the truth again; believing, that where sin had abounded, grace might yet superabound; and that great as his crimes were, God’s mercy and Christ’s love were yet greater? — Saving truths these, which Judas could no longer believe, having *done* FINAL *despite to the spirit of TRUTH, the spirit of FAITH, who leads, not drags into the truth, who teaches, not forces sinners in the way of faith.*

Why did David attack Goliath with undaunted courage? Was it not because he heartily *believed*, that

the Lord would not be insulted by that blaspheming monster, and would stand by any one that attacked him in the name of the God of Israel ? A great truth this, thro' which he waxed valiant in fight, killed his gigantic adversary, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens. — Why did he afterwards stain his righteous soul with atrocious crimes ? Was it not because he practically, and therefore most cordially believed an horrid untruth ; namely, that the company of his neighbour's Ewe-lamb was preferable to the delights afforded by the Lamb of God ? — Why did he afterwards repent ? Was it not because he received the truth again ; heartily believing, that he had committed dreadful sins, and that he must repent or perish ?

Again ; Why are men lovers of the world more than lovers of God ? Is it not because they really *believe*, that the world can make them happier than God ? — If I say, “ I *believe* that God is preferable to the world,” and do not seek my chief happiness in him, do not I deceive myself, and tell a gross untruth ? And while St. James charges me to show my faith by my works, does not St. John show himself a rational divine, when he protests, that I am a LIAR, and that the TRUTH is not in me ? Once more : Why did Saul of Tarsus, *breathe threatnings and slaughter* against Christ's members ? Was it not because he *believed* the grand lie of his day, i. e. that Christ was an impostor ? And why did he afterwards breathe nothing but fervent love to christians, and unextinguishable zeal for Christ's glory ? Was it not because his inmost soul was penetrated with the force of this almighty truth, Christ is the true Messiah ; he loved me, and gave himself for me ?

From these, and a thousand such observations upon the *conversion* of sinners, and the *perversion* of saints, I draw the following consequences, which, I trust, will recommend themselves to the reason of every calm enquirer after truth.

(1) To convert or pervert a man, you need only change his principle of action, his predominant practical

tical belief of a damnable lie, or of a saving truth. For if the spring is new, so undoubtedly will be the streams. If you have a new tree, you will infallibly have new fruit. If the rudder is truly turned, the ship will certainly take a new course.

(2) *Truth* is the heavenly *seed*, that produces living faith; and living *faith* is the heavenly *root*, that produces *good* works. *Truth* and *faith* therefore, are at the bottom of every good work. To suppose them absent from a *good* work, is to suppose that a *good* work can be void of *sincerity* and *truth*, and of course void of *goodness*. And is not this supposing a glaring absurdity? On the other hand, a *lie* is the hellish *seed*, that produces *unbelief*; and *unbelief* is the hellish *root* that produces *bad* works. A *lie* and *unbelief* are then at the bottom of every *bad* work. To suppose them absent from a *bad* work, is to suppose that a *bad* work can be wrought in *faith* and in *truth*, which is as impossible as to do a *good* work in *malice* and *wickedness*.

(3) As the rise and fall of a good weather-glass infallibly shows the real, tho' as yet invisible alterations of the atmosphere: so our rising from sin and our falling into sin surely evidence the secret, and perhaps unnoticed changes that happen in our faith for the better or for the worse; the whole of our words and actions, taken in connection with our views and tempers, being the certain result of our present faith or unbelief, and consequently the best marks that we please or displease God, according to the last and capital proposition of the Minutes.

(4) When there is *truth* in the inward parts, there is *Faith* also; it being as impossible to admit religious *Truths* any other way but by *faith*, as it is to partake of the *light* any other way but by *sight*. *Truth* and *faith* tincture with goodness the most extraordinary actions. Thus Samuel cuts Agag in pieces before the Lord, St. Paul strikes Elymas with blindness, St. Peter strikes Ananias with sudden death, Phineas runs Zimri and Cosby thro' the body, Abraham offers Isaac in *truth* and *faith*; and God counts it to them for righte-

eousness to all generations for evermore. On the other hand, the actions, that do not spring from *truth* and *faith*, be they ever so good in the eyes of men, are an abomination in the sight of God, who *requires TRUTH in the inward parts*: Thus king Saul offers a sacrifice, Judas pleads for the poor, the pharisees make long prayers, Pilate washes his hands from the blood of Christ; and God reckons it to them for sin to all generations for evermore.

(5) Some actions, such as the commission of wanton adultery, and of treacherous murder, can never be tinctured by truth and faith, because they have for their principle triumphant impurity, gross injustice, and flagrant unbelief; and whenever such sins prevail in the soul, the contrary virtues, holiness, truth, and faith are gone; just as when racking pains and a putrid fever prevail in the body, ease and health are there no more. To suppose therefore, that living faith lurked in David's heart during his grievous apostacy, is as absurd as to suppose that health lurks in a body infected by the plague, and life in a corpse. "Ay, but David's faith, like that of Peter, was raised up again:" True; and so was the body of Lazarus, that of our Lord, and that of the Ruler's daughter: but is this a proof, that Lazarus, Christ, and the damsel [who, it seems, had been dead but a few minutes] did not undergo a real death? A concession however I cheerfully make to my objector; wishing, that it may be a means of reconciling him as much to the faith of St. James, as I am reconciled to that of St. Paul. If he grants me, that Peter's and David's faith went out as really as a candle, which is put under an extinguisher; I will grant him, that, thro' the long-suffering of God, who never seals the *absolute* reprobation of sinners so long as their day of visitation lasts, the extinct faith of those fallen saints was as an extinguished light, that continues to smoke, and can the sooner be lighted again. Their falls, great as they were, did not amount to complete obduracy and the sin against the Holy Ghost. *He will not quench the smoking*

Smoking flax, was a promise, in which they were still interested, with all those who have not yet *done final despite to the spirit of grace*. Free grace therefore visited them again; and when she put her candle to their hearts, they again knew their day; they welcomed the light; the smoking flax once more caught the pure flame of truth; and living faith, with her luminous train, was rekindled in their breasts. Thus, by improving the rest of the accepted time, they escaped the fate of Judas, who so hardened himself, that his candle was put out in final darkness; they avoided the doom of the foolish virgins, who so procrastinated repentance, that their extinguished lamps were never lighted again. To return:

(6) As our pulses all over the body exactly answer to the beating of our heart; so *our INWARD works*, that is, our thoughts, desires, schemes, and tempers, exactly answer to our faith or principle of action. I say *our INWARD works*, because hypocrites can mimic all *external works*. How improperly then is St. Paul quoted against the works of faith? Does he not assure us himself, that *saving faith worketh by love*? And is it not as absurd to oppose the *works* of faith to *faith*, as to oppose the pulses to the beating of the heart; nothing in the world being more strongly connected? However, as the heart always beats before the arteries; and as a cannon is always fired before the explosion can be heard, the ball felt, or the flame perceived: so faith always moves before it can set fear, hope, desire, or love in motion. And if godly fear, hope, desire, and love, which are our *internal* good works, always spring from FAITH; our *external* good works, such as publicly worshiping God, doing good to our neighbour, &c. from a right principle, and in a right manner, always flow from FAITH also: For our external works are nothing but the effects of the works, which we have already wrought in our hearts; just as the rapid motion of a ball out of the cannon, is nothing but the effect of the motion, that was communicated to it, while it was yet in the cannon.

(7) If every internal good work (suppose a sincere *operative* desire to love my enemy for God's sake) necessarily springs from a *good* principle, that is, from true faith; it follows, that so long as I consistently continue in the same disposition, my principle of action is good, and I am (so far) a *good* man, according to the standard of one or another of the gospel-dispensations. On the other hand, if any one inward, bad work (suppose a malicious desire to hurt my neighbour) springs from a *bad* principle, it follows also, that so long as I continue in that bad disposition, what ever degree of sanctity I may pretend to, my principle of action is *bad*, I am a *wicked* man of the pharisaic or of the antinomian order.—To conclude:

(8) As by suppressing the beating of the heart, you may stop all the pulses; so by suppressing the act of faith, you may put a stop to all good works. On the other hand, as by cutting the main arteries you may put an end to the motion of the heart: so, by suppressing the good motions caused by faith, you may put an end to the life of faith, and destroy the new creature in Christ Jesus.

* * * * *

S E C T I O N VIII.

The REASONABLENESS of the doctrine of salvation by faith is farther evinced by a variety of arguments.—How much we are indebted to the Solifidians, for having firmly stood up in defence of FAITH: How dearly they have made us pay for that service, when they have so enforced our XIth article, which guards salvation by faith, as to make void the XIIth, which guards morality. — And why the overpowering splendor of TRUTH is qualified by some shades.

SHOULD some readers still think, that it is unreasonable to dwell *first* upon faith, and to insist *more* upon it than upon the other works and graces, which
adorn

adorn the life and character of a christian ; to remove their scruples, and to vindicate more fully the fundamental doctrine of *salvation by faith*, I present them with the following remarks.

(1) If true *Faith* is the root that produces hope, charity, and sincere obedience, as the preceding section evinces, is it not reasonable *principally* to urge the necessity of *believing aright* ? The end of all preaching is undoubtedly to plant the tree of evangelical obedience ; and how can that tree be planted, but by its *root* ? Was a gardener ever charged with unreasonableness, for not setting a tree by the branches ?

(2) If *faith working by love* is the heart of true religion, should we not bestow our chief attention and care upon it ? Suppose you were a physician, and attended a patient, who had an impostume in his stomach and another on his hand ; would you do honour to your skill, if overlooking the internal mischief, you confined your attention to the external ulcer ?

(3) The most excellent gift of God to man, next to the invaluable gifts of his Son and Spirit, is that of the saving *Truth*. Nay, the Son of God, in his prophetic character, came only to display the *Truth*. He was manifested in the flesh to be its herald among men. St. Paul tells us, that *Christ witnessed a good confession before Pilate* ; and St. John informs us, that part of this *good confession* ran thus : *To THIS END was I born, and for THIS CAUSE came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto THE TRUTH*. Now, if *bearing witness to the TRUTH* was a great cause, and a peculiar end of our Lord's coming into the world ; if the Spirit itself is called *the Spirit of truth*, because his grand office is to reveal and seal the *truth* ; if *truth* is no better than error to us, till we receive it by *faith* ; and if the scripture declares four times, that *The just shall LIVE by his FAITH*, a declaration this, which St. Paul confirms by his own experience, when he says, *I LIVE by FAITH* ; is it not evident, that when we practically reject the doctrine of *faith*, we reject *life*, together with all the blessings which are brought to light
by

by the gospel; a gospel *disbelieved* being undoubtedly a gospel REJECTED.

(4) Our feelings and conduct greatly depend upon our apprehensions of things. A *false* report that your son is dead reaches your ears; you *believe* it, and pangs of grief distract your breast. Soon after a *true* account of his being drowned is brought to you; you *disbelieve* it, and you remain unaffected.—A diamond by moon-light glitters at your feet; you think, it is only a glow-worm, and this mistake prevents your stooping to pick it up. A glow-worm shines at some distance; you fancy, that it is a diamond, and you run to it with a degree of hope and joy proportionable to the degree of your vain confidence. The God of truth is an infinite, spiritual diamond, if I may use the expression; and yet, so faint are our ideas of his excellence, that we overlook him, and madly run after deceitful objects, the brightest of which are but glow-worms to the *Father of lights*. Nothing therefore but a firm *belief of the truth*, stamping our souls with just apprehensions of things, and fixing in us a strong persuasion of their intrinsic worth or vanity, can rectify our judgment, and make us regulate our conduct according to the dictates of God's word, which are invariably one with the truth, and with the nature of things.

(5) When St. Paul exhorts his converts to the pursuit of things *honest, just, pure, lovely, &c.* he mentions *first* with great propriety *whatsoever things are TRUE*. For, as soon as obedient *faith* allows *Truth* to sit upon the throne, there is an end of mental anarchy: All things resume their proper ranks and places. Creatures in a great degree disappear before their Creator; earth, before heaven; and time, before eternity. Thus Satan's charm is broken; God begins to be to us, what he is in himself, *all in all*; and when we *see* him such, if our faith is lively and practical, we *treat* him as such: We answer the end of our creation: Truth prevails: *Satan falls as lightning from heaven*: Man is man; and God is God.

(6) If

(6) If *truth*, next to God, is the most powerful thing in the world : if we can have no communion with God, but by the medium of *truth* : if *falsehood* is the rankest poison in hell ; and if we take a draught of this poison, as often as we take in a capital religious error ; can you reasonably explode the doctrine of *salvation by faith*, since the office of living *faith* is to expel the poison of destructive error, and to receive the reviving, healing, strengthening cordial of gospel-truth ?

(7) If an *unfeigned faith* in the Truths, which God reveals under one or an other of his evangelical dispensations, is the instrumental cause of all our good works ; whilst a cordial consent to one or more of Satan's lies, is the parent of all our bad actions :—if these two springs move every wheel of righteousness and of iniquity in the world ; is it not highly consistent with reason to mind them *first* ? Would you not pity your watch-maker, if he so regarded the hand and dial-plate of your watch, as to forget the wheel-work and spring ? And can you approve the method of *Honestus*, who insists upon good works, without ever touching upon the *principles* of sincere obedience, and upon *faith*, which is the spring, that sets all in motion ?

(8) Again, if Abraham, by *not staggering at the promise of God thro' UNBELIEF*, and by *being strong in FAITH*, gave glory to God, and did set to his seal that God is true :—if you cannot honour a superior more, than by receiving his every word with respectful confidence, and moving at his every beck with obedient alacrity :—and if *faith* thus honours God, why should you refuse it the first place among the graces, which support and adorn the church *militant* ? Especially since the Lord declares, that *the PURE in HEART shall see God*, and that our HEARTS are PURIFIED by FAITH ?—And since the scriptures testify, that *without HOLINESS no man shall see the Lord*, and that we are SANCTIFIED thro' FAITH that is in him ?

(9) All fulness dwells in God : creatures abstracted from the divine plenitude are mere emptiness. Rational creatures, in their most perfect state, are only *moral*

ral vessels filled with the grace of God, and reflecting the light of divine truth. Now if we can be saved any other way but *by grace thro' obedient faith*, i. e. by freely receiving the grace and light of God, thro' the practical belief of the truth proposed to us : — if we are in any degree saved by our *proper merit thro' faithless* works ; we may indulge pharisaic boasting. But, God does not so give his glory to human worms : therefore such a *boasting is excluded by the law of faith* ; and the apostle wisely observes, that salvation is of FAITH, *that it might be by GRACE* ; the justifying faith of sinners always implying a cordial acknowledgment of their sin and misery, and an hearty recourse to the tender mercy of our God whereby the day-spring from on high has visited us † more or less clearly, according to the dispensation we are under.

(10) The

† To establish the doctrine of the gospel-dispensations, to show that saving truth, in its various manifestations, is the object of saving faith, I need only prove, that a man, in order to his salvation, is bound to believe at one time, what he was not bound to believe at another. Take one instance out of many. If St. Peter had died just after he had been pronounced *blessed* for acknowledging, that our Lord was the Son of God, he could not have been *curst* with a "*Depart from me,*" &c. he would have been *saved* : and, in that case, he would have obtained salvation without believing one tittle about our Lord's resurrection ; [might I not also say, about his crucifixion ? See note 13, p. 43] and nevertheless St. Paul, a few years after, justly represented *that* article as essential to the *salvation* of those, to whom it is revealed : *If thou shalt BELIEVE with thy heart, that God hath RAISED the Lord Jesus from the dead, thou shalt be SAVED*, Rom. x. 9. — Few people, I think, can read the acts of the apostles, without seeing, that the numerous conversions wrought by St. Peter's preaching, were wrought by the force of this truth, "*God has raised up that Jesus, whom you have crucified :*" A victorious truth this, which would have been a gross *untruth* three months before the day of pentecost. — Nay, what is at one time an article of *saving* faith, may at another time become an article of the most confirmed unbelief : Thus, the expectation of the Messiah, which was a capital article of the faith of the ancient Israelites, is now the buttress of the babel of modern Jews. The property of faith is then to make our hearts bow to the truth, as it is manifested to us ; it being evident, that God never blamed the children of men, for not believing what was never revealed to them.

MEMO-

(10) The manner in which *faith* and its works *exclude boasting*, may be illustrated by a comparison. A beggar lies dying at your door, you offer him a cordial, he takes it, revives, and works. — A deserter is going to be shot, you bring him a pardon from the king, if he will receive it with grateful humility, he does so, joins his regiment, and fights with such courage that he is promoted. Now in these cases it is evident, that *pharisaic* † *boasting* is excluded. If the beggar lives ever so long, and works ever so hard—if the deserter fights ever so manfully and is raised ever so high; yet, they can never say, that *their doings* have procured them the life, which they enjoy; for, before they did such works, that life was graciously given, or restored to them, upon the easy terms of confidently taking a remedy, and humbly accepting a pardon offered. The application is easy: By our fallen nature we are *conceived in sin, and children of wrath*: God freely gives us the light of life in Jesus Christ; faith without necessity humbly receives it, and works by it; the believer therefore, can never be so unreasonable, and ungrateful, as to suppose, that his working merited him *the light of life*, by which he began to work righteousness: so long as he deserves the name of a believer, he knows, he feels, that his faith is in the FIRST place a *mere receiver*. *What hast thou, that thou hast*

MEMORANDUM.] At the bottom of page 162, I have said, that “The genuine seed of the word is *always* good, *always* full of divine energy.” I desire the candid reader to read the following lines as more particularly-expressive of my meaning.

The word is *Truth*; and *Truth*, like the sun, is *always* efficacious where its light penetrates. But I would by no means insinuate, that the truth may not, like the sun, shine more brightly and powerfully at one time, than at another: The word of truth, however, always performs (tho’ more or less sensibly) that wherunto God sends it; being always a *savour of life unto life to them that believe*, or of *death unto death to wilful unbelievers*, according to the grand decree of conditional election and reprobation, *He that believeth, &c. shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned*.

† There is an *evangelical boasting*, which St. Paul recommends to others, and indulges himself: See the note, page 117.

hast not received, roars like thunder in the ears of a *lively* faith, and like lightning strikes dead the *pharisaic* boast.

(11) I say, that faith is in the FIRST place a *mere receiver*: this deserves attention. If we consider faith as a conduit-pipe, which at one end receives the truth and power of God, and at the other end refunds those living streams to water the garden of the Lord; we may with propriety compare that mother-grace to the pipe of a watering pot, which, at the internal, unseen opening receives the water that is in the pot; and at the external, visible perforations returns it, and forms artificial showers over the drooping plants. According to the doctrine of *grace*, maintained by the Solifidians, faith does nothing but *receive* the grace of God thro' Christ; and according to the doctrine of *works*, maintained by the moralists, faith is a mere *bestower*; but, according to the gospel of Christ, which embraces and connects the two extremes of truth, Faith is *first* an humble, passive *receiver*, and *then* a chearful active *bestower*: It receives grace and truth, and returns love and good works. In that respect it resembles the heart, which continually receives the blood from the veins, and returns it into the arteries. If the heart ceases either to *receive*, or to *return* the blood (no matter which) its motion and our animal life are soon at an end: and if faith ceases either to *receive* grace, or to *return* good works, its motion and its life soon terminate in spiritual death, according to the doctrine of St. James. If the Solifidians and moralists candidly looked at faith in this rational and scriptural light, they would soon embrace the whole gospel, and one another. By considering *faith* as a RECEIVER [according to the first gospel axiom] Honestus would avoid the *pharisaic* extreme; and by viewing it as a BESTOWER, [according to the second gospel-axiom] Zelotes would avoid the antinomian delusion; and both would jointly recommend the humble, chearful, consistent *passiveness* and *activity* of bible-believers.

(12) *If*

(12) *If we receive the witness of men, says St. John, the witness of God is greater : for, under the christian dispensation, this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son : He that believeth on the Son of God hath the testimony in himself : but he that believeth not God, hath MADE HIM A LIAR, because he believeth not the record, that God gave of his Son.* Upon these awful words I raise the following argument. If a state of absolute doubt is quite unnatural : — if it is almost impossible to keep the balance of our judgment unturned for one hour, with respect to all saving truths and damning lies : — if the stream of life, which hurries us along, calls us every moment to action : — if we continually do good or bad works : — if good works certainly spring from saving faith, and bad works from destructive unbelief : — if skepticks are only to in imagination, theory, and profession : — if our daily conduct demonstrates whether our heart inclines most to the lies of Satan, or to the truths of God : — and if the moment we practically reject God's truths, we embrace the lies of the God of this world, and by that means take him for our God : — if, I say, this is the case, what reasonable man can be surprized to hear the mild Jesus say, *He that believeth not shall be damned* ? Can there be a greater sin — a sin more productive of all iniquity, and more horrid, than to make the lying Devil a god, and the true God a liar ? Nevertheless, dreadful to say ! this double crime is actually committed by all, that make an act of wilful, practical unbelief ; and the commission of it is indirectly recommended by all those, who decry the doctrine of salvation by faith.

Lastly : If our first parents fell by BELIEVING the gross lies told them by the Serpent ; is God unreasonable to raise us by making us BELIEVE the great truths peculiar to our dispensation, that the divine *leaven of sincerity and truth* may counterwork, and at last expel the satanic *leaven of malice and wickedness* ? Who ever thought it absurd in a physician to proportion the remedy to the disease ; the antidote to the poison ?

And why should even the incarnation of the Son of God, appear a means too wonderful for an end so important ? If Apollyon, the Prince of darkness, had malice enough to incarnate himself, and assume the form of a *serpent* to deceive man ; why should not *the Saviour of the world*, the healing antitype of the brazen serpent, incarnate himself also, and assume the form of a *man* to atone for, undeceive, and restore mankind ? Why should not the living TRUTH, *the seed of the woman*, bruise the proud, *lying* Serpent's head with his celestial club, the humble, bloody cross ? In a word, Why should it be thought incredible, that the Son of God, who, as our Creator, is far more nearly related to us than our natural parents, should have graciously stooped as low as the *human* nature to redeem us ; when Satan wantonly stooped as low as the *beastly* nature to tempt us ? On the contrary, is it not absurd to suppose, that hellish, wanton malice has done more to destroy, than heavenly, creating love to save the children of men ? And is it not highly reasonable to believe, that an operative faith in divine truths, is as powerful a means of obedience and salvation, as an operative faith in satanic lies is of disobedience and damnation ? For my part, the more I compare the genuine gospel with the nature of things, the more I admire their harmony ; wondering equally at the prejudices of those hasty professors, who pour perpetual contempt upon reason, to keep *their* irrational opinions in countenance ; and at the unreasonableness of those pretended votaries of reason, who suppose, that the doctrine of salvation by faith is incompatible with good sense.

“ But [says an objector] if unfeigned faith in the light—if a cordial *belief of the truth* instrumentally turns us from the power of Satan to God ; why have you published polemical tracts against the Solifidians, whose favourite doctrine is, *Believe :—he that believeth hath everlasting life ?* ”

Ans. By the preceding pages it is evident, that we do not differ from the Solifidians when they preach
salvation

salvation by faith in a rational and scriptural manner. So long as they do this, we *wish them good luck* in the name of the Lord; and I once more offer them my despised pulpit to preach, that we *are saved by grace thro' faith, not of ourselves, it is the gift of God*; provided they will not oppose this doctrine to that of the apostle laid down in the *Scriptural Essay*. Nay, I do more. I publicly return them my sincere thanks for the bold stand they have made for *faith*, when the floods of pharisaic ungodliness lifted up their voice against that mother-grace, and threatened to destroy her with all her offspring. But alas! how dear have they made us pay for that service, when they have asserted, or insinuated, that true faith is inamissible, that it can live in an heart totally depraved, that a man's faith can be good when his actions are bad, detestable, diabolical; in a word, that true christians may go any length in sin, may plunge into adultery, murder, or incest, and even proceed to the open worship of devils, like Solomon, without losing their title to a throne of glory, and their justifying, sanctifying, saving faith!

This they have done, in flat opposition to our Lord's doctrine: *A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither does a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit: for every tree is known by its own fruit*, Luke vi. 43. — This they do still, in direct contrariety to conscience and experience, which agree to depose, that as we bow to the *Spirit of Truth* or to the *Spirit of error*, we become either *children of light* or *children of darkness*: — And this, some of them seem determined to do, to the stumbling of the judicious, the deceiving of the simple, and the hardening of infidels; notwithstanding our xiith article, which strongly guards the doctrine of faith against their solifidian error. — “*Good works*” [says our church in that truly anti-calvinistic article] “*do*” [at this present time] “*spring out* †

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NECES-

† Altho' good works spring out *necessarily* of a *lively* faith, yet a *lively* faith does not *necessarily* spring out of our hearts, I beg leave to explain

NECESSARILY of a true and lively faith" [and consequently bad works, of a false and dead faith:] "in so much that by them a LIVELY" [and by bad works a DEAD] "faith may" [at this present time] "be as evidently known, as a tree is discerned by the fruit."

But, in the mean time, how do they evade the force of that article? Why thus, David bears this year the fruit of adultery, hypocrisy, treachery, and murder, before all his kingdom: Last year he bore the fruit of chastity, sincerity, truth, and brotherly love. However, according to the Crispian doctrines of grace, David must be a tree of righteousness now, as much as when he bore the fruits of righteousness. If this is not the case, Mr. Fulsome's gospel will be false: Now this must not be. *That* gospel must stand.—"But if it stands, our xiith article falls to the ground."—Oh! we can prop it up by saying, that tho' a child of God, a tree of righteousness, may now produce adultery, &c. &c. &c. yet he will certainly produce good fruit again *by and by*. To this salvo I answer, that the article has only two grand designs: the one inseparably to connect a lively faith and good works; and the other, to indicate the manner in which I may know whether I have a lively or a dead faith. Now if I may have a lively faith while I commit adultery, &c. &c. &c. it evidently follows: (1) That the necessary connexion between a lively faith and good works

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explain this, and to secure the doctrine of liberty by one or two comparisons. When the queen had been pregnant a certain time, she necessarily bore the prince of Wales; but she did not necessarily conceive him; for she gave her hand freely to the king; yea, and when she had conceived the prince, she might have prevented his birth by procuring abortion.—Again: Altho' a ship is necessarily influenced by the rudder, yet the rudder is not necessarily influenced by the pilot. He is as free to move it to the left hand as to the right. This comparison is the best that occurs to my mind, and yet it is not entirely just; for, after all, a ship being an inanimate thing follows the motion of the rudder by natural necessity, but man being a moral agent has no absolute constraint laid upon him. The necessity by which good works follow a lively faith, is then rather a strong moral indispensableness, than a natural invincible necessity.

is totally lost : (2) That *adultery* and *murder* may denote a *lively* faith as well as *purity* and *love* : — And (3) That our *xii*th article has not even the worth of a nose of wax, and may be burned with St. James's epistle, as an article " of straw." And yet these gentlemen are the persons, that represent themselves as the only *fair* subscribers to our articles, and charge us with prevarication for taking the *xvii*th article in connexion with the *vi*th, the *xii*th, the *xv*th and the *xxx*i, as well as with the latter part of that article itself, which demand that the election it speaks of, be understood of *conditional* election !

To return : Should the reader object, that ' If God had suspended our salvation upon our *practical belief of the truth*, he would have put so conspicuous a badge upon the saving truth peculiar to each dispensation, that no body could have mistaken it for error, enthusiasm, priest-craft, or nonsense : ' I answer :

(1) God having decreed to prove the loyalty and moral sagacity of his rational creatures, could not but place them in such circumstances, in which they might have an opportunity of exerting themselves. If hares were chained at the doors of dogkennels, what sagacity could hounds manifest above mastives ? And if the deepest truths always lay within the reach of the most besotted souls, what advantage would candid diligent enquirers have over those, who wrap their minds in the veil of prejudice, and stupidly compose themselves to sleep in the arms of ignorance and sloth ?

(2) God will *reward* us according to our works of faith ; but if the truth were attended with an *irresistible* energy, if it shone *always* upon our minds as transcendently-bright, as the dazzling sun does sometimes upon our faces, would God display his wisdom in *rewarding* us for confessing it ? Did he, did any man in his senses ever offer to reward us for believing, that a bright luminary rules the day, when its meridian glory overpowers our sight ?

(3) An atmosphere surrounds the earth : a secondine wraps the embryo : Rinds, husks, and shells defend all the fruits of the earth ; and why should not *truth*, that heavenly fruit, be also preserved in a proper envelope ? If the bottles that contain the most generous wines are not only corked, but sealed ; why should it be thought strange, that saving *truth*, the most powerful remedy and the richest cordial in the world, should in general require what I beg leave to call *uncorking* ?

(4) Pearls are found in the bottom of the sea : Gold and diamonds lie generally deep in the earth : We sink pits to a prodigious depth, only to come at the black mineral which we burn. Thousands of men go as far as the East and West Indies, to fill our canisters with tea and sugar. Our meanest tradesmen sip the dews of both hemispheres at a breakfast. The sweat of negroes and sailors [might I not say their *blood* and *lives* ?] are sometimes poured out like water, to secure the sweets of our favourite decoction. And yet it may be with a dish of tea in our hand, and a gold ring on our finger, we gravely complain that saving truth lies a great way off, and that God is unjust in placing it in obscure mines, which cannot be worked without some trouble and industry.

But (5) altho' no body can be established in the truth without LABOURING for the meat, that endureth to everlasting life ; yet God's terms of salvation are not so hard as some prejudiced people conceive. Nor do I scruple to assert, that if we could read the hearts of all men, we would see, that for a time unbelievers take as much pains to *exclude* the light of truth, as believers do to *welcome* it ; and that wicked men work as intensely [tho' not as intentionally] to make their reprobation and damnation certain, as good men do, to make their calling and election sure : For, the wicked is snared in the WORK of HIS OWN hands — the reward of HIS HANDS shall be given him : — the wages of his sin is death, and he frequently toils like a horse for his wages, drawing iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin-

ning as with a cart rope, to hale himself and others into the burning lake.

From the preceding answers I conclude, that God, who makes the golden light of the sun, and the silver light of the moon succeed each other, and who wisely tempers the blaze of a summer's day by the mildness of the starry night, with equal wisdom qualifies the blaze of the day of *truth* by the mild obscurity of a night of *probation*; not only that the *flaming truth* may be more delightful at its return, but also, that there may be room left for a *gentle trial* of our faith, and for the *reasonable rewardableness* of our works of faith.

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S E C T I O N IX.

I N F E R E N C E S.

(1) **I**F *faith* is so closely connected with *TRUTH*; *present salvation* with *faith*; and *eternal salvation* with the *works of faith*; how injudicious are those gentlemen, who assert, that *principles* are nothing; and that it little matters what doctrines we hold, provided our actions are good! Alas! if our leading principles are wrong, how can our actions be right? If we are men of *no principles*, or of *bad principles*, and do seemingly-good actions; do we not do them from *bad, pharisaical motives*? Even when such actions appear good to man, who judges according to appearance; are they not evil before the Searcher of hearts? Are they not detestable before the Examiner of principles? Undoubtedly; if they are *pharisaical*; *hypocrisy* being the most odious sort of iniquity, in the sight of him, who *requires truth in the inward parts*.

(2) If the effects of *Truth* are so wonderful; and if the pure word of God is essentially one with *Truth*; how fatal is the mistake of the laymen, who slight the gospel-word! who listen to a sermon with less attention than they do to a play! and who read the scriptures

tures with less eagerness than they do the news-papers ! And how culpable are those clergymen, who preach the first sermon they set their hand upon ; without examining whether it contains truth, or error, or a mixture of both—at least, without considering whether it is adapted to the capacity, and circumstances of their hearers !

(3) Can we decry *prejudice* too much, if it unfits our souls for receiving the truth, as trash unfits our stomachs for receiving proper food ? Should not a narrow, bigoted spirit, that collects itself like an hedgehog in its own fancied orthodoxy, and bristles up assertions and invectives instead of arguments, be firmly opposed by every generous enquirer after Truth ? Can we deplore too much the case of those sanguine persons, who judge of the strength of their faith by the force of their prepossession ; and who fancy, that an hundred plain scriptures, and as many cogent arguments, have no weight, if they do not countenance their favourite sentiments, and misunderstood feelings ? And can we too warmly recommend a candid, sober, fearless turn of mind, which lays us open to information, and disposes us publicly to espouse the cause of Truth ; even when destruction threatens her, and her despised adherents ?

(4) *Charity rejoiceth in the TRUTH ; and tho' I speak with the tongues of angels, says St. Paul, if I have not charity, i. e. if I do not rejoice in the TRUTH, whether it makes for or against my prejudices, I am become as sounding brass.* Upon this footing, what can we say of those warm moralists, who, in their zeal for *works*, are ready to burn against the doctrine of faith ? What, of those rash solidifiers, who, in their zeal for *faith*, are ready to lay down their life against the doctrine of works ? Alas ! like St. Paul in the days of his ignorance, they court, and yet persecute the Truth ; they embrace, and yet stab the divine stranger. These false martyrs may give their body to be burnt for one truth against another ; but God will say to them, *Who required*

required this at your hands ? and they themselves will say, It profiteth us nothing.

(5) If there are various forms in the school of Truth, how unreasonable is it to say, that none have any acquaintance with her, but such as are in one of the highest forms ! And if the temple of Truth has various divisions to which we advance, as we go on *from faith to faith* ; how cruel is it to consign over to damnation the sincere souls, who have yet got no farther than the porch !

(6) If there are as many sorts of religious truths, as there are of nourishing food ; how irrational is it to despise those truths, which the apostle compares to *milk*, merely because they are not the truths, which he calls *strong meat* ! On the other hand, if we cannot yet receive those strong truths, how rash are we, if we represent them as chaff or poison ? And what mischief is done in the church of Christ, by those who deal in palpable absurdities, and in errors demonstrated to be of a stupifying or intoxicating nature ; especially if they retail such errors to an injudicious, credulous populace, under the name of *rich honey* and *gospel-marriage* !

(7) If divine Truth is ONE, thro' its various appearances ; and if *the light of the righteous*, who holds on his way, *shines more and more unto the perfect day* ; what shall we say of those prejudiced men, who oppose the Truth with all their might, merely because it does not come up to their false standard, or because it appears in a dress, to which they are not accustomed ? Did a Persian ever refuse to admire the *rising sun*, because it was not the *meridian sun* ; or laugh at it, as being an insignificant meteor, because it rose under a cloud ? If Christ is not ashamed to call himself *the Light* and *the Truth*, should we be ashamed to confess him in his lowest appearances ? Is there not some resemblance between Christ *natural*, and Christ *spiritual* ? If Christ exalted at the right hand of God, is one with Christ transfigured on the mount—bleeding on Calvary—lying in the manger—confined, an helpless

less embryo, in the virgin's womb; may not the triumphant Truth, that shines like the sun in the heart of a *father in Christ*, have some affinity with the spark, that glows in the heart of an infant in grace under the dispensation of Noah? Ought we to give up the greatest part of our neighbours, as men that "*never had grace*," when the scripture expressly declares, that *the saving grace of God has appeared unto all men*, and that *Christ spiritual is the light of the world, that enlightens every man*? Let mystical Herods seek the young child's life; but thou, man of God, leap for joy like the unborn Baptist, before the least and feeblest appearance of thy Lord. Instead of calling it "*common grace*," that thou mayst cut it off the next moment as "*no grace*," cherish it as *saving grace* in thy own breast, and in the heart of all that are around thee.

(8) If the most powerful displays of Truth *improve* its feeblest appearances, without ever *contradicting* them; how mistaken are the men, who impose upon us the *immoral doctrines* of the *antinomians*, and the *unevangelical doctrines* of the *pharisees*! When we have once admitted, that "There is an holy God, who makes a difference between the just and the unjust;" can we, without renouncing that truth, turn *antinomians*, and think that a man, who actually defiles his neighbour's wife, can actually be a *man after God's own heart*?—And when we have been taught our second gracious lesson; namely, that "We are miserable sinners;" can we, without renouncing this principle, suppose that we can be saved any other way but by the covenant of grace and mercy? Away then, for ever away with *antinomian* and *pharisaic* delusions, which are built upon the ruins of these two capital truths, *God is holy*, and *Man is sinful*!

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S E C T I O N X.

An Address to Baptized Heathens. X. . .

HERE I would take leave of my readers ; but they have a *conscience*, as well as *reason* ; and therefore I beg leave to address the former of those powers, as bluntly as I have done the latter ; diversifying my expostulations, according to the different cases of the persons, into whose hands providence may direct these sheets.

I. If you do not make the bulk of my readers, I fear you make the bulk of the nation, O ye that regard pleasure, profit, and honour, more than justice, mercy, and the fear of God :—Ye, that far from embracing divine *Truth* at the hazard of your character, spread abroad scandalous *untruths*, to the ruin of other people's reputation :—Ye, who try to persuade yourselves, that religion is nothing but a monstrous compound of superstition, enthusiasm, and priestcraft :—
 X Ye, who can violate the laws of temperance or honesty without one painful remorse ; breaking thro' promises, oaths, and matrimonial or sacramental engagements, as if there were no future state, no supreme Judge, no day of retribution, no divine law enacting, that *who-soever loveth, or maketh a lie, shall be cast into the lake of fire* ; and that *the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the people that forget God* :—YE are the persons, that I beg leave to call BAPTIZED HEATHENS. X. . .
 Baptismal water was applied to your body, as a figure of the grace which purifies believing souls. Ye received, and continue to bear a *christian* name, that binds upon you the strongest obligations you can possibly be under, to partake of *Christ's* holiness, and to lead a sober, *christian* life : But how opposite is your conduct to that of *Christ* ? Alas ! conscientious *heathens* would disown you ; and shall *God* own you ? Shall the searcher of hearts forgive your *immorality*,
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in consideration of your *hypocrisy* ? Will you live and die with such a *lie in your right hand*, and upon your forehead ? God forbid ! — If you have not sold yourselves to the father of deceits for ever ; pay yet some attention to *natural, moral, and evangelical* truths : they recommend themselves to your senses, your reason, and your conscience.

(1) Regard *natural* Truths. Earthly joys vanish like dreams. Life flies like an arrow. Your friends or neighbours are daily seized by sickness, and dragged into eternity. Death comes to terminate your delusions, and set his black seal upon your false lips, your wanton eyes, your rapacious hands, your luxurious palate, your sinful, treacherous breast. E'er long the king of terrors will screw you down in his hard couch, a *coffin* : he will convey you away in his black carriage, a *hearse* : he will confine you to his loathsome dungeon, a *grave* ; and there he will keep you in chains of darkness and corruption, till the trump of God summon you to *judgment*.

(2) And say not that the doctrine of a day of *judgment* is a fable. If you do, I appeal to *moral* Truths. Is there not an essential difference between truth and falsehood, between mercy and cruelty, between honesty and villainy ? Have you, with all the pains you have taken about it, been able to erase from your breast the law of truth and mercy, which the righteous God has deeply engraven there ? Is there not something within you, that, bad as you are, forbids you to wish you father dead, that you may have his estate ; and your wife poisoned, that you may marry the woman you love ? If you say, that these are only prejudices of education ; I ask, How come these prejudices to be universal ? Why are they *the same*, even where the methods of education are most *contrary* ? Why do they reign in the very countries, where there are neither *magistrates* nor *priests* ; and where of course *politicks* and *priestcraft* never bore the sway ? If your conscience would condemn you for the above-mentioned crimes ; how much more will God do it, who is
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the Author and Judge of your conscience? Does not your good sense tell you, that, so sure as the wonderful machine of this world did not make, and does not preserve itself, there is a God, who made and preserves it? and that this God is possessed of ten thousand times more truth, equity, impartiality, justice, and power, than all the *righteous* rulers in the world were ever endued with? And, to say nothing of the gracious checks, and sad forebodings of your guilty conscience; does not your *reason* discover, that as certain as this great God is possessed of infinite wisdom, power, and justice; and has given us a moral law, he will call us to an account for our breaches of it; and that, as he does not in general do it in this world, he will infallibly do it in a future state?

(3) If reason and conscience thus lead you to religion; regard *religious* truths: They are supported by so great a variety of well-attested facts, by such clouds of righteous witnesses, by so many astonishing miracles, and accomplished prophecies—they so perfectly agree with the glory of our Creator, the interests of mankind, the laws of our nature, and the native desire we have for immortality—they so exactly coincide with our present, as well as future happiness; that you cannot expose your unreasonableness more, and do yourselves a greater injury, than by rejecting them.

What *reasonable* objection can ye make to these scriptural directions? *Cease to do evil. Learn to do good. Speak the TRUTH in LOVE. Return to the Lord. Call upon his name.* Say, “Grant to us in this world the knowledge of thy TRUTH, and in the world to come life everlasting.” Confess yourselves sinners, great sinners: Spread this melancholy truth before the throne of divine mercy,—spread it with tears of undissembled repentance. *Except you repent, you shall all perish:* but, if you *sow in tears, you shall reap in joy.*

And suppose not, that I want to drive you to despair. On the contrary, I declare, that dangerous as your case is, it is not absolutely desperate. The gospel offers you a remedy. You have dealt with lying sha-

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dows, but you may yet embrace the eternal substance. You have wounded the Truth; but Christ, from whom you have the name of *christian* — Christ, who says, *I am the Truth*, has been wounded for you. You have crucified revealed Truth, and the Prince of life has been crucified in your place. I point you to his cross, and declare in the name of unprejudiced reason, that few histories are supported by such a variety of indisputable evidences, as the wonders that redeeming love wrought on Calvary for you.

Let not the scandalous falls of apostates, and the bad lives of hypocritical christians, frighten you from the gospel. Immoral and unloving men, high as their pretensions to faith may be, are no more christians than you. Suffer not the disputes of professors to keep you in infidelity; for they prove the truth, and not the falsehood of christianity; being expressly foretold Acts xx. 30. 1 Cor. xi. 19. Jude iv. 1 Tim. iv. 1. Nor stupidly wonder that the Serpent should most spitefully bruise the heel of the Truth that most powerfully bruises his head. Above all be candid; be inquisitive; apply to the *Father of lights* for direction; and his invisible hand will conduct you over every rock of offence, and lead you to the sure foundation, *the rock of ages, the TRUTH as it is in Jesus*.

How near is that *Truth* to you! It always *embraces* Mercy, and Mercy now embraces you. Oh! the length and breadth, the depth and height of redeeming mercy! It spares you to believe — to repent — to live. The arms of divine patience still encircle your guilty soul, and bear up your mortal body above the terrors of the grave. Crying as your sins are, the cries of your Saviour's blood are yet heard above them. Provoking as your unbelief is, it has not yet provoked God to set upon you the seal of absolute reprobation. Unspotted Holiness, glorious Majesty, flaming Power, thundering Justice, weeping Mercy, bleeding Love — all the divine attributes join yet in a concert of grace and truth. You are the object of it; and the burden
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of their terrifying, melting accents is, *Turn ye, turn ye : Why will ye die, O house of Israel ? Why should iniquity be your ruin ? Turn ! for I have redeemed you. Turn ! and the second death shall have no power over you. Turn ! and you shall have a crown of life.*

Thus, my dear fellow-sinners, and far more earnestly than I can describe, Mercy and Truth exert themselves in your behalf ; waiting only for your consent, to diffuse their divine perfumes thro' your converted souls. This is *the day of God's power* — Your gospel-day — This is *a day of salvation*, a day of the spiritual jubilee, a day of *the year of release* : Know it : improve it. Break your bonds : claim your liberty : change your service : scorn to be the devil's drudges : become the servants of the most High. Regard neither the husks, nor the grunts of the swine : the heavenly feast is before you. The Father of the prodigal son runs to meet, to forgive, to welcome, to embrace you ; and to raise your doubting hearts, he bids me impress these gracious promises upon your yielding breasts. *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and does that which is lawful and right (and what is more lawful and right for sinners, than to repent, believe, and obey the gospel) he shall save his soul alive.—Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts ; and let him return unto the Lord, for he is merciful ; and to our God, for he will* ABUNDANTLY pardon.

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S E C T I O N XI.

An Address to Christianized Jews.

AND Ye, christianized Jews, will ye still be offended at our *sincerely* preaching *free grace* to all our fellow-gentiles ? Will ye still stop your ears and cry out, *The children of Abraham, the temple of the Lord are*

we? Or, in other terms, We are the little flock necessarily contradistinguished from the immense herd of absolute reprobates? Will ye still assert † “*Reprobos ideo in hanc pravitatem addictos, quia iusto et in- scrutabili Dei iudicio suscitati sunt at gloriam ejus sua damnatione illustrandam:*” “*That the reprobates are devoted to wickedness, because thro’ the just and unsearchable judgment of God, they were raised up to illustrate his glory by their damnation?*” — Will ye still add? † “*Quos vero damnationi addicit, his iusto quidem et irreprehensibili, sed incomprehensibili ejus iudicio, vitæ aditum præcludi:*” “*That by God’s just and irreprehensible, tho’ incomprehensible judgment, the way to life is blocked up for those, whom he has devoted to damnation?*” — Will ye never blush to intimate? † “*Quos ergo Deus præterit, reprobat: neque aliâ causâ, nisi quod ab hæreditate, quam filiis suis prædestinat, illos vult excludere.*” “*Therefore those whom God passes by, he reprobates; for NO other reason but this: He WILL exclude them from the inheritance, which he predestinates for his sons?*” — Will ye still call “blind,” all who think, that God is sincerely loving to every man, without any exception in the day of salvation? Will ye still monopolize the light that enlightens every man, who comes into the world? Will ye still sound the bottomless abyss of divine mercy with your short line, and judge of the Almighty’s enlarged heart by the narrowness of your own? O learn to know the God of Love, the God of Truth, better. *He is not willing that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance.—He commands ALL men every where to repent: And he bids us account his long-suffering, salvation; assuring us, that the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering leadeth to repentance even those wretches, who, after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and of his righteous judgment.*

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† These three quotations are taken from *Calvin’s institutes. Third Book. Chap. 24. Sec. 14.—Chap. 21. Sec. 7.—Chap. 23. Sec. 1.*

If you will not credit God's *word*, pay at least some regard to his OATH. As I LIVE says he, *I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live.* — Just as if he said: ' By myself I swear, that I have absolutely reprobated no man. ' If any perish, their destruction is of themselves, and ' not of merciless decrees rashly imputed to my sovereignty. Free-agency in man, and not free-wrath in me, sinks those, who make their conditional rejection and reprobation sure by their *unnecessary* unbelief, and *avoidable* impenitency. Far from *de-lighting absolutely* in the reprobation of any one sinner, I solemnly protest, that I would *offer violence* to the *liberty* of the most obstinate, and *force* them all into heaven by the exertion of my omnipotence, ' if my Truth as a Lawgiver, my Justice as a Judge, ' my Veracity as the inspirer of my prophets, my ' Wisdom as a Rewarder, and my Equity as a Punisher, did not absolutely forbid it.'

Come then, my prepossessed brethren, show yourselves *the children of Abraham*: return to the God of your Father — the God by whom *ALL the families of the earth are BLESSED in the seed of Abraham*. Think not that the Lord is only jealous of his supreme dominion; nor make him *graceless* and *merciless* towards countless myriads of reprobated infants to extol the *grim sovereignty*, which your imagination has set up.

" Set not at odds heav'n's jarring attributes;

" Nor, with one excellence, another wound."

Allow God to be " all o'er, consummate, absolute,

" Full-orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete,"

merciful in the day of salvation, and *just* in the day of judgment, to *every* individual of the human race. What can you possibly object to a doctrine so rational, so scriptural, so worthy of God?

If you complain that we make the way to heaven too broad, I ask, Ought we not to represent it as broad

as the scriptures make it? Do we make it WIDER than St. Peter did, when truth and love made him divest himself of his jewish prejudices, and cry out with pleasing amaze : *Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is accepted of him ?* Or, do we make it NARROWER than St. Paul, when he wrote, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die : no adulterer, &c. hath ANY inheritance in the kingdom of God ?*

For your own credit do not ask : “ If all men may
 “ be saved thro’ Christ, by following the light of the
 “ gospel-dispensation, which they are under, what
 “ advantage hath the christian ? and what profit is
 “ there of baptism and christianity ? ” If you make
 such an objection, you show yourselves to be “ CHRIS-
 TIANIZED JEWS ” indeed. The apostle has just said,
If the uncircumcision i. e. if uncircumcised heathens
[like Melchisedec or Job, Cornelius or the Canaanitish woman]
keep the righteousness of the law according
to their light, shall not their uncircumcision be counted
for circumcision ? that is, shall they not be saved, as
 well as if they were circumcised jews ? St. Paul saw,
 that the partial heart of the jews would take fright at
 his doctrine ; and would start an objection, capable of
 demolishing, if possible, the impartiality of God, and
 the freeness of the everlasting gospel. He therefore
 produces this formidable objection thus : If the Gen-
 tiles may be saved by following their light, *what ad-
 vantage hath the Jew ? or what profit is there of circum-
 cision ?* Rom. iii. 1. The answer which he gives, stops
 the mouth of all Jews, whether they live in London,
 Rome, or Jerusalem : *The Jews, says he, [and much*
more the Christians] have much advantage every way,
chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles
of God. The Heathens have only the light of God’s
 works, the light of God’s providence, the light of rea-
 son, the light of conscience, and the light of that sav-
 ing grace, which has appeared to all men, teaching them

to live soberly, &c. and reprovng them when they do not. But the Jews, [to say nothing of the light of *tradition*, which is far brighter among them, than among the Heathens] over and above this *five-fold* light, have the light of the *old* testament; and Christians, the light of the *new*.

Come then, my prejudiced brethren, let St. Paul's answer satisfy you. Get from under your parched gourd of reprobation: *Let not your eye be evil, because God is good*; nor fret, like Jonah, because the Father of mercies extends his compassion, even to all the humbled Heathens in the great city of Niniveh. *As the elect of God, put on bowels of mercy*, and show yourselves the genuine children of him, who is *loving to every man, and whose mercy is over all his works*: So shall your mistakes no longer straiten your minds, sour your tempers, and shut your hearts against your "*non-elected*" neighbours.

And supposing you are of the happy few, in whose souls the impartial grace of God over-rules the ordinary consequences of your partial doctrines: — Supposing you are *LOVING to every man*, and have more bowels of mercy than the God whom you extol: — Supposing you are *TRUE to all men*, and surpass in *sincerity* the God whom you recommend, who calls *all men every where to repent*, and all the day long stretches out his hands in token of his compassionate love to people, on whom he absolutely fixed his immortal hatred before the foundation of the world: — Supposing, I say, you have the happiness of being so much better than your principles, so much holier than the God of your *OPINIONS*. [Note: I say not *the God of your SALVATION*] — Yet, by renouncing those *opinions*, you will no longer countenance antinomianism, deceive the simple, contradict yourselves, shock moralists, and render christianity contemptible in the eyes of all, that confound it with your doctrines of *forcible* grace to hundreds, and of *forcible* wrath to thousands.

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† Should you countenance your *jewish* notions by saying, “ We are *Christians* : we have nothing to do with the heathens ;” I answer : (1) You have far too much to do with them, when, by the “ doctrine of grace,” which you so zealously inculcate, you *indirectly* send them, one and all, to the pit ; unless they are brought under the *christian* dispensation. (2) You renounce the Church of England, if you disregard them : for on good-friday [the day on which Christ *tasted death for every man*] she enjoins us to pray thus for them : “ O merciful God, who hatest *nothing* that “ thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a *sinner*, “ but RATHER that he should be converted and live, “ have mercy upon ALL Jews, Turks, Infidels, and “ Hereticks.” (3) You indirectly sacrifice the feelings of humanity, and the honour of God’s perfections to your unscriptural doctrine of grace, when you embrace the horrid idea of the ensured damnation of the Heathens, for the injudicious pleasure of saying, “ Why me ! Why me !” and of teaching the “ poor [reprobated] creatures,” while they sink into the bottomless pit, to say, “ Why me ! Why me !” —A dreadful *Why me* this, which is not less offensive to God’s justice, impartiality, goodness, and truth ; than your *Why me* is odious to his wisdom, equity, veracity, and holiness. (4) If Cain was culpable for intimating, that he had nothing to do with his brother, when he had just knocked him on the head ; are they praise-worthy, who enjoy with peculiar delight, and recommend with uncommon glee, “ doctrines of grace” [so called] which absolutely fix the *unavoidable* damnation of perhaps as many millions of their unborn fellow-creatures, as Abel had hairs upon

† Should the persons, whom I now address, say, that I falsify my subscriptions to the 18th article of our church, by asserting that even the heathens, who fear God and work righteousness by the *general* light of Christ’s grace, are accepted thro’ Christ’s *unknown* merits ; I refer them to the 57th and 58th pages of the *Vindication* of Mr. Wesley’s *Minutes*, where that objection is answered.

upon his head? And do they mend the matter, when, to vindicate their severe opinions, they calmly wipe their mouth, and say, "We have nothing to do with the Heathens:" That is, in plain English, "Our orthodoxy demands, that they should inevitably perish, if they do not explicitly believe in Christ crucified of whom they never heard: nor do we care what becomes of them. Let them sink, provided *our* doctrines of grace stand."

O my dear brethren, my heart is enlarged towards you, tho' your's is straitened towards the Heathens, and those, who do not engross the light of *the sun of righteousness*. Suffer the word of exhortation one moment more. Do not you detest the character of a stiff pharisee? I know you do, in the circumcised progeny: And why should you admire it in the baptized race? I am persuaded, that you abhor the damnatory bull of those self-elected men of old, who, from the height of their conceited orthodoxy, looked down upon their neighbours, and said, "*This people who knoweth not*" [what we call] "*the law, are cursed.*" And will you exemplify their uncharitable positiveness by indirectly saying, *This people*, these myriads of men, *who know not* [what we call] THE GOSPEL, *are cursed*? Will ye turn christianized pharisees, to countenance abandoned antinomians? — No: the spark of candor in your breast is stirred, and almost sets fire to your prejudices. You are staggered, you are ready to yield to the force of Truth; some of you would do it even now, if you were not afraid, that our doctrine of *free grace* obscures the *christian* dispensation, and encourages the pernicious delusion of ANTICHRISTIAN MORALISTS. To convince you, that your fear is groundless, permit me to expostulate with them before you.

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S E C T I O N XII.

An Address to antichristian Moralists.

MORAL MEN, who ridicule the *christian* faith ; you suppose, that your honesty counterbalances your sins, which, by a soft name, you call *foibles* ; and for which you hope, that God will never punish you with hell-torments. I do not desire to make the worst of things. I wish, you were as good as you fancy yourselves to be. I wish, you may have been as exact in *all* the branches of your duty as you pretend. I would rejoice, if the law of respectful obedience to your superiors, of courteous love to your equals, and of brotherly-kindness to your inferiors had always been fulfilled in your words and actions, in your looks and tempers. I am ready to congratulate you, if in all cases ye have done to your *fellow-creatures*, exactly as ye would be done by ; and never plunged once into the gulph of intemperance : But permit me to ask ; If you have *fellow-creatures*, have you not a *Creator* ? And if you have a Creator, do not reason, and conscience, command you to render to him warm gratitude, chearful praise, humble adoration, and constant obedience. But have ye done this one year, one month, one day, *ONE hour* in *ALL* your life ?

Altho' ye are so ready to make us understand, that ye are not as other men, adulterers, unjust, uncharitable, hypocrites, &c. are ye entirely satisfied with your own goodness ? Nay, if ever you *looked into the perfect law of liberty*, and searched your breasts with *the candle of the Lord*, can you say, before the omniscient Searcher of hearts and spirits, that there is one of the commandments which you never broke in its spiritual meaning ?

If upon second thoughts ye cannot acquit yourselves : and if God's dignity as a Creator, his veracity as a Lawgiver, his wisdom as a Governor, his justice

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as a Judge, his holiness as a God, forbid him to hold the guilty guiltless; or to forgive them in a manner inconsistent with any one of his infinite perfections; are ye wise to despise an Advocate with Him — a divine Prophet—an atoning Mediator? Is it prudent in you to run *from* the city of refuge, to which you should fly with unabated swiftness? Do ye act a reasonable part when ye shelter under the dispensation of the Heathens, from the blessings that pursue, and from the light that surrounds you, in this christian land? If I may allude to the mysterious divisions of Solomon's temple; will ye obstinately remain in *the court of the Gentiles*, when you are graciously invited to enter into *the holy place*, with sincere Jews; yea, into *the holy of holies*, with true Christians? Think ye, that, because righteous Heathens are saved without the explicit knowledge of Christ, ye may be saved upon *their* plan? If ye do, may the following remarks help you to see the unreasonableness of this conclusion!

(1) Not to repeat the hints already given to *baptized Heathens*; I ask: Is not a grain of *sincere* love to truth, the very beginning of a true conversion? Is that man a *sincere* lover of light, who runs away from the light of the sun and moon, under pretence that he has the light of a star? Do those people *sincerely* love money, who, when they are presented with *gold* and *silver*, throw it back to the face of their benefactor, because they have some *brass*? And is that moralist a *sincere* lover of truth, who contemptuously rejects the *silver* truths of the jewish dispensation, and the *golden* truths of the christian gospel, under pretence that he is an adept in "the religion of nature," and has, what I beg leave to call, the *brass* of heathenism?

(2) Ye talk much of the *religion of nature*: But, should ye not distinguish between the religion *natural* to man in his *unfallen* state, and that which is *natural* to him in his *fallen* condition? Is not the regimen, which is *natural* to the healthy, *unnatural* and frequently destructive to the sick? If upright, innocent man needed not a spiritual physician, does it follow
that

that depraved, guilty man can do without one? Does not heathenism allow the fall and degeneracy of man? Have not some of the wisest pagans seen, tho' darkly, the need both of a mediator, and of a propitiatory sacrifice? Do ye think it prudent, so to depend upon your *self-righteousness*, as to trample under foot the jewish and christian revelation, together with the discoveries of confederate Heathens? Does your *wisdom* show itself to advantage, when it thus makes you sink below heathenism itself?

(3) No adult Heathen was ever saved without the repentance of the contrite publican. "I am a guilty, helpless sinner, totally undone, if the mercy of him that made me, does not extend itself to me: Great Author of my existence, pity, pardon, and save me for thy mercy's sake." Now, if ye were brought to this genuine repentance, would ye despise the light of revelation, that recommends it, and leads on to farther attainments? Think ye, that those, who *sincerely* rejoice in the dawn of day, will readily decry morning light? Is it not therefore much to be feared, that pharisaism and impenitency, stand in your way to christianity, more than a mistaken respect for reason and truth? Nay, does not *reason* bid you assent to well-attested matter of fact? And are not the jewish and christian revelations so inseparably connected with notorious events, that it is less absurd to doubt the exploits of Alexander and Cæsar, than to disbelieve the miracles of Moses and Jesus Christ?

(4) The Heathens, who were saved without the explicit knowledge of Christ, far from *despising* it as you do, *implicitly* desired it; and those, that were blessed with a ray of it, rejoiced in it like Abraham. That precious knowledge is offered to you; and, shocking to say! you reject it! you make sport with it! you pass jests upon it! you call it imposture! enthusiasm! — Oh! how much *more tolerable* will it be for pharisaic Heathens; yea, for Chorazin and Bethsaida in the day of judgment, than for you, if you die under so fatal an error! And how can ye flatter yourselves,
that

that because righteous Heathens, who have but *one* talent, shall be saved in the *faithful* improvement of it; you, who have *five*, shall be saved, tho' you bury *four* of them?

“ Oh! but I, for one, improve the *fifth*: I am *moral*.”—God forbid, I should discountenance *morality*! I value it next to piety: nay, *true* morality is the second branch of true piety. Nevertheless, this you must permit me to say: Your morality hath either pride, impenitency, and hypocrisy at the bottom; or humility, sincerity, and truth. If it is the former; your morality, like Jonah's gourd has a worm at its root. When the sun of temptation shall shine warmly upon you, or when death shall lay his cold hand upon you, your morality will wither, and afford you neither safety, nor comfort: But, if it has sincerity, and truth at the bottom; and if you are faithful; your little light will increase, the clouds raised by your prejudices will break, and you shall *see the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ*, because, like Saul of Tarsus, you do not oppose the truth maliciously, but *ignorantly in unbelief*. And Oh! may these pages convey to you the accents of that *Truth*, which *shall make you free*! and may the gracious voice, which formerly thundered in the ears of the great jewish moralist, the fierce opposer of the christian gospel, *Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?*—May that voice, I say, whisper to each of you, “*Honestus! Honestus! why neglectest thou me? I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*—Jesus, who yet act a mediator's part between my righteous Father and thy self-righteous soul. *It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks* of my truth, and the stings of thy conscience.—I am a sun of righteousness and truth: Wrap thyself in unbelief no more: let the beams of my grace penetrate thy prejudiced soul, and kindle redeeming love in thy frozen breast. Nor force me by an *obstinate* and *final* denial of me before men, to fulfil upon thee the most terrible of all my threatnings by *denying thee also before my Father and his angels*; for, if YE, to whom my gospel is FULLY preached, believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.”

* * * * *

S E C T I O N XIII.

An Address to a Penitent Mourner. X.

THOU deniest that loving Redeemer no longer,
 O thou poor, MOURNING PENITENT, who art
 ready to sink under the burden of thy sins, and longest
 to find rest for thy dying soul. The Lord, who pro-
 nounces thee *blest*, says, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my*
mourning people. — *By whom shall I comfort thee?* —
 Oh! that it were by me! Oh! that I were so happy
 as to administer one drop of gospel-cordial to thy
 fainting spirit! Tho' I am less than the least of my
 Lord's servants, he sends thee by me a Benjamin's
 portion: Be not above accepting it. Thou hast hum-
 bly received the *wounding truths* of the gospel; why
 shouldest thou obstinately reject the *healing* ones?
 Thou hast eaten the bitter herbs of repentance: yea,
 thou feedest upon them daily, and preferrest them to
 all the sweets of sin: Why then, Oh! why should thy
 heart rise against the flesh and blood of the true pas-
 chal Lamb? Why shouldest thou starve, when *all*
things are now ready? Why shouldest thou not believe
 the *whole* truth, as well as *one part* of it? Will the
word of God's grace be more true ten years hence,
 than it is now? Is not *Christ the same yesterday, to day,*
and for ever? If thy dull *believing in God* has already
 saved thee from thy vain conversation, and thy out-
 ward sins; how much more will a chearful *believing*
in the Lord Jesus, save thee into christian righteou-
 ness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!

Do not *begin to make excuse* and say, "I must not
 believe the joyous truths of the gospel, till they are
first powerfully applied to my soul." It is right, very
 right for thee, for all, never to rest short of such an
 application. But how art thou to wait for it? In the
 way of duty? or out of it? Surely in the way of duty.
 And is it not thy duty, no longer to *make God a liar?*

Is it not thy bounden duty, as it is thy glorious privilege, to *set thy seal*, as thou canst, to the word of God's *grace*, as well as to the declaration of his *justice*? Does he not charge thee to *believe* [tho' it should be *in hope against hope*] the reviving record, *which he has given of his Son*? Is not this the record: *That God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*?—That to as many as receive him—that is, to as many as believe on his name, he gives power to become the sons of God?—That God commendeth his love towards us, in that when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us “men, and for our salvation”?—That his blood, thro' faith on our part, *cleanseth from all sin*?—That he was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification?—And that he even now *maketh intercession for us*; bearing us out of hell in the arms of his mercy; and drawing all men to him, who *justifieth the ungodly*, that renounce their ungodliness as thou hast done, and believe in Jesus as I want thee to do?

† If it is a saying worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save even the chief of sinners; upon gospel terms; he undoubtedly came to save me and thee. Do not thou then foolishly excommunicate thyself from redeeming love. Away with thy unchristian, discouraging notions about absolute reprobation, præterition, non-election, &c. &c. Doubt not but thou art **CONDITIONALLY** elected, that is, *chosen IN CHRIST* to eternal salvation; yea peculiarly chosen of God **EXPLICITLY** to believe in that *Just one*, who gave himself a ransom for all, and by his one oblation of himself once offered, made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the **WHOLE WORLD**.—Believe then thy *election, and that of God*.—As certain as Christ hung upon the cross, flesh of thy flesh and bone of thy bone, thou art *chosen to eternal salvation* **THRO' sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth**. Wilt thou then be powerfully saved here, and eternally saved hereafter? Only make thy calling and election sure, **THRO' SANC-**
TIFICATION

TIFICATION of the spirit ; and make sanctification of the spirit sure, THRO' BELIEF of the TRUTH.

Believe, as well as thou canst, this comfortable, this sanctifying truth, *God so loved THE WORLD, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Be not afraid to conclude, upon the divine record, that God loves thee, that *Christ gave himself for THEE*, and that the Holy Ghost will gloriously witness the Saviour's love to thy soul. And calmly, yet earnestly wait for a divine token, and an abiding sense of this love upon thy heart.

But, I repeat it, wait in faith ; — wait, believing the truth : — wait, doing *thy work* ; and Christ will surely finish *his own* : He will save thee to the uttermost, from sin and hell, into holiness and heaven. Remember, that as he once bled for thee, so he now *worketh in thee both to will and to do.* — Up then, and be doing. WORK OUT *thy own salvation with fear and trembling.* Thou canst never do God's part, and he will never do *thine* : Do not expect it ; nor let the song of “ finished salvation ” make thee conclude, that thou hast nothing to do. Even J. Bunyan, in his “ *Heavenly footman,* ” cries out to the slothful, “ *If thou wilt have heaven, thou must run for it.* ” And if thou dost not believe him, believe the christians of the Lock-chapel, and of the Tabernacle, who, when they do justice to the second gospel-axiom, agree to “ *complain of spiritual sloth,* ” in the following hymn :

“ Our drowsy pow'rs, why sleep ye so ?
Awake, each *suggish* soul.
Nothing has half thy *work to do*,
Yet nothing 's half so dull,

The little ants, for one poor grain,
Labour, and tug, and strive ;
Yet we, who have a *heaven to obtain*,
How *negligent* we live !

We, for whom God the Son came down,
And labour'd for our good ; How

How careless to SECURE that *crown*,
 He purchas'd with his blood !
 Lord, shall we lie so sluggish still,
 And never *act our Parts* !
 Come, holy Dove, from th' heav'nly hill,
 And sit, and warm our hearts."

† The *God of truth* will warm thy heart in a rational manner, by the *truth*, which is the divine cordial generally used by the Comforter for that purpose. Thou must therefore take that cordial first. If thou art of *little faith*, there is no need that thou shouldst be of *little sense* also. Some *absurdly* refuse to believe the gospel till they can feel it, if I may so speak, with their finger and thumb : so gross, so carnal are their ideas of truth ! And others think it their duty just to look at, or hear about the gospel feast ; supinely waiting till all its rich blessings are forcibly thrust into their hearts, or at least conveyed there, without any endeavour of their own. " When the truth shall be powerfully applied to my soul, says a modern Thomas, I will believe, and not before : " Avoid this common mistake. If thou wert invited to a feast, and one said, You must not eat this rich food, unless it is *first* powerfully applied to your stomach ;" wouldst thou not reply, that thou must *first* eat it, in order to such an application ? Be as wise in spirituals ; and remember that the way of relishing the *gospel*, and FEELING it to be *the power of God unto salvation*, is actually to believe it as we can, till *the spirit of truth* makes us feel its *full efficacy*.

To *eat* or *drink* spiritually, and to *believe* or *receive* the truth, are gospel-terms of the same import. Come then, leave all thy excuses to those, who have learned the lessons of *voluntary*, tiresome *humility*. If the king offered thee a present, would it not be impertinent to make him stretch out his hand for one hour, under pretence that thou art not yet worthy of his bounty ? And thinkest thou, that a similar conduct is not highly provoking to the King of kings ? Does he not com-

plain, I called and ye refused:—I stand at the door and knock:—I am wet with the dew of the night:—All the day long have I stretched my hands to idle and sturdy beggars—yea, to a gainsaying and disobedient people? Come then, know thy distance: know thy place: know thy God: send thy absurd ceremoniousness back to Geneva: crucify thy guilty fears on Calvary; and make the best of thy way to Sion, the mountain where God has made unto ALL people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines, of fat things full of marrow, of wines well refined.

There is room, says the Lord: beat down their unbelief with the new thrashing instrument that hath teeth; bind their souls with all the cords of divine and brotherly love; draw them with the bands of a man, with arguments, threatnings, promises, expostulations, &c. compel them to come in. There is balm enough in Gilead, bread enough in my house, love enough in my heart, blood enough in the fountain that my Son has opened for sin, grace enough in the river that flows from my throne, truth enough in the gospel of my grace, to heal, nourish, delight, transport a world of prodigal sons and daughters. And is there not enough for thee, who fearest God? for thee, to whom the word of this christian, this great salvation is sent? Did not Christ himself break the bread of consolation for thee, when he said, *Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you*? Did he not offer thee the cup of salvation, when he added, *This is the cup of the new testament in my blood shed for the remission of sins*; drink

ALL of it, and carry it into all nations—preach it, offer it, to every creature. I bring thee this bread; it came down from heaven to give life to the world: it was surely consecrated in Gethsemane, and broken on Calvary for THEE, man, for THEE, woman, and for THY salvation. Oh! if the fragments of perishing, barley-bread were so to be gathered, that none of them might be lost; with what thankfulness shouldst thou receive the morsel, which I set before thee! With what hunger after righteousness shouldst thou feast upon it!

it ! How shouldst thou try to relish every crumb, every particle of gospel-truth — of *the meat that endureth to everlasting life* — of *the word of the Lord, that abideth for ever*.

Wonder at our Lord's condescension. Lest thou shouldst think, that the word of his servants is insignificant, when it is the word of truth ; he *prays particularly for them, that shall believe on him thro' their word* ; and he asks, *How is it that ye do not discern this time of love ? Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right, and make for your peace ? — O Ye, that have no money, come, buy and eat wine and milk ; yea eat and drink abundantly, O beloved, without money and without price. HEARKEN diligently unto me : EAT ye that which is good : Let your soul delight itself in fatness, in the richest gospel-truths. Whosoever will, let him come and take of the bread and water of life freely. Thus the Water and the Blood, the Spirit and the Word sweetly agree to invite thee, to chide thy delays, to bid thee come and welcome to Christ, and to all the unsearchable riches of his grace.*

† If thou refusest this drop of gospel-cordial, this crumb of the bread of life ; or if, after a faint attempt to take it, thou sinkest back into thy stupid unbelief, I beg leave to enquire into the reason. (1) Is it *the hour and the power of darkness* ? Is thy mind so confused, and thy heart so distracted, that in this moment thou canst neither consider, nor welcome the truth ? In this case, wait groaning : If thou canst not wait *in hope believing against hope*, endeavour at least not to yield to despair. This storm will soon blow over ; the *time of refreshing will come* ; and the Lord, who permits thee to have fellowship with him in Gethsemane, will soon enable thee to triumph with him upon the mount.

(2) Hast thou little or no appetite for the truth ? In this case I fear, thou still feedest upon husks and ashes, which spoil thy spiritual digestion ; and I advise thee to exercise repentance ; remembering that *to be carnally minded is death*, and that the promise is not made to the slothful ; but to them, who *thro' faith,*
and

and patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory — to them who, in taking up their cross, and denying themselves, inherit the gospel-promises.

* (3) Hast thou made an absurd covenant with unbelief, as Thomas? Art thou determined not to credit God's record, unless he comes down to thy terms? Dost thou still confound faith with its fruits, and God's work with thine own? — If this is thy case, how justly may the Lord suffer thee to go on moping, not only for a week, as the obstinate apostle did; but for years! And after all, when thou hast long dishonoured God, and tormented thyself by thy wilful unbelief; thou wilt be glad to do upon a death-bed, what I want thee to do now. Being then surrounded by threatening billows, driven from thy carnal moorings, and tossed into true wisdom, thou wilt without ceremony venture upon the merits and blood of thy Saviour, and strive to enter by wrestling faith, and agonizing prayer, into *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. Happy would it be for thee in the mean time, if thou wert not wiser in thy own conceit than seven men that can render a reason; if thou wert not obstinately bent upon nursing thy curse; if thou didst confer with flesh and blood no more; and if, regarding the gospel-passport more than solifidian embargoes, and the word of God more than the dispiriting speeches of faint-hearted spies, thou becamest one of the *BABES, to whom it is our heavenly Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom*; one of the *VIOLENT who take it by force*. Thou wouldst soon find, that these two dispositions are as compatible as the two gospel-axioms; and, *receiving the end of thy faith*, thou wouldst soon, perhaps to-day, experience the astonishing force of Truth, and taste the ravishing powers of the world to come.

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S E C T I O N XIV.

An Address to Christian Believers.

Y E taste those powers, happy believers, who see that God is love — boundless, free, redeeming, pardoning, comforting, sanctifying love in Jesus Christ. The more you believe it, and the more you feel it. Do then always *the work of faith*, and you shall always *abound in the patience of hope, and in the labour of love*. You have believed the Truth, and it has made you free : *Rejoice then in the Truth : Worship the God of Truth : Triumph in Christ, the living Truth : And be daily baptized with the Spirit of Truth : Beware of enthusiasm ; speak the words of soberness and Truth : God is not the author of non-sense.*

Sail with all possible care thro' the straits of pharisaism and antinomianism. Many, by deviating from the word, have almost *made shipwreck of the faith*. While some rest in high, pharisaic forms; others catch at empty solifidian shadows; or slide into the peculiarities of a censorious mysticism, harden themselves against *the gentleness of Christ*, and oppose a part of the truth as it is in Jesus : Embrace ye the *whole* : Be valiant for the *whole* : Recommend the *whole* : But, above all, bring forth the fruits of the *whole*.

+ Be steady : Many who believed once as firmly as ye do, that Christ was a sacrifice for sin, consider him now only as a martyr for the truth. And some, who were fully persuaded, that God is *loving to every man* while the day of salvation lasts, now can *bear*, yea perhaps *delight* to hear it insinuated, that he is graceless and merciless to myriads of his unborn creatures. Be not thus carried about by a blast of vain doctrine, in opposition to the full tide of scripture and reason. Honour all men, and give double honour to those to whom

whom it is due ; but be not moved from your steadfastness either by names, or numbers. To judge of truth by popularity, is absurd. Warm, zealous men, who can draw the attention, and work upon the passions of the populace, will always be popular ; Mr. W—s not excepted : but his popularity, you know, is no proof that his principles are unexceptionable. Go not then by that deceitful rule. When Truth is at stake, mind popular applause as little as a syren's song ; and regard a Bonner's rack as little as a Nebuchadnezzar's dulcimer. Be cast into the furnace of persecution with *two* companions, rather than to bow with *thousands* to the most shining, the most celebrated, and the richest image of error. If your two companions forsake you, Oh ! do not forsake the Truth. Turn not your back upon her, when she wants you most. Run not away from her colours, when the enemy pours in like a flood. If she is driven out of the professing church, follow her to the wilderness — and if need be, to the den of lions. There the God of Daniel will be with you : And from thence he will bring you out : for God will stand by the Truth, and she will prevail at last. *Buy her* therefore at any rate ; *buy her*, tho' you should give your last mite of wealth, and your last scrap of reputation for her : *and sell her not*, tho' you should gain the whole world by the unhappy bargain.

† *These things, O men of God, have I written unto you concerning them that, by fair shows of spirituality and voluntary humility, seduce you into pharisaism or antinomianism : But the anointing, which you have received of God, abideth in you, (since ye have not been seduced) it is truth, and is no lie, abide in it therefore : Err not from the Truth. Walk in the Truth : Do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth : And, as you have purified your souls by obeying the Truth, thro' the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that this love extend itself particularly to your mistaken opponents : Love them, love one another with a pure heart fervently. You will often be obliged to part with peace in*
order

order to maintain *truth*; but you never need part with *love*. Be you herein followers of Christ and St. Paul. You know that the Pharisees, the Herodians, the Sadducees, and the Devil himself, would gladly have made peace with those two champions of the truth, upon the scandalous terms of betraying and giving her up. But St. Paul had not so learned Christ, and our Lord scorned to deny himself the Truth, and to worship the Father of lies. See how calmly, how lovingly, how resolutely they fight this good, this bloody fight of faith. Volleys of invectives and calumnies have already been thrown out against them; and now, reproving their persecutors, and yet praying for them, they go and meet bonds and prisons, the stocks and the scourge, the provoking taunt and the cruel mocking, the bloody sword and the ignominious cross. And how many stand by them in their extremity? Have ye forgotten the amazing number? *They ALL forsook him and fled—ALL men forsook me, I pray God it may not be laid to their charge.* And, astonishing! Judas, Peter, and Demas led the van.—O Jesus, stand by our weakness, and we will stand by thy truth. Thou sayst, *will ye also go away?* And to whom should we go, gracious Lord: *Hast thou not the words of Truth, the words of everlasting life?* Art thou not *the light of the world and the life of men?* Our light, and our life? Could all the *ignes fatui* in the professing world; could even all the *stars* in thy church, supply the want of thy light to our souls? No, Lord; Be then our sun and shield for ever. Visit the earth again, thou uncreated Sun of righteousness and truth: Hasten thy second advent: Thy kingdom come! Shine without a cloud! Scatter the last remains of Error's night! Kindle our minds into pure truth! our hearts into perfect love! our tongues into ardent praise! our lives into flaming obedience!

Amen.

Bold

Bold may we wax, exceeding bold,
No more to Error's ways conform,
Nor shrink thy harshlest *Truths* t'unfold,
But more than meet the gathering storm.

Adverse to earth's erroneous throng,
May each now turn his fearless face ;
Stand as an iron pillar strong,
And steadfast as a wall of brass.

Give us thy might, thou God of pow'r,
Then let or men, or fiends assail ;
Strong in thy strength, we'll stand a tow'r,
Impregnable to earth or hell.

A N

A P P E N D I X

To prevent objections.

TO plead for *Error* in an Essay on *Truth* would be preposterous. If I have done it, it has been inadvertently ; and I shall be thankful to any of my readers, who will be at the trouble to set me right. But I once more beg forward disputants, not to produce assertions and invectives, instead of arguments and well-applied scriptures ; and not to wire-draw the controversy by still urging objections, which I have already directly or indirectly answered ; unless they show, that such answers are insufficient ; that my arguments are inconclusive ; and the scriptures I quote, misapplied. ^{Two} of those objections however, deserve a more direct and fuller answer.

I. Should

† I. Should it be said, “ I puzzle people by asserting
 “ that there can be any other saving faith, but the
 “ *christian* faith ; and any other *object* of saving faith
 “ but *Christ crucified* : ” I reply, that, tho’ *Christ cruci-*
fied is the capital object of *my* faith, I dare not admit
 the *contracted* notions, that the Solifidians have of
 faith : because, if I did, I should subscribe to the *necef-*
sary damnation of three parts of my fellow-sinners out
 of four ; and reject Christ’s word, under pretence of
 exalting his person : Take a few more instances of it.

Did not our Lord himself say to his disciples, *Have*
faith in God ; distinguishing *that* faith, from faith in
 himself, as mediator, John xvii. 3 ? Does not St. Paul
 declare, that, as *believing* God *was imputed to Abra-*
ham for righteousness ; so *it shall be imputed to us, if we*
believe on HIM, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the
dead ? Do I “ forge ” the following scriptures ? *The*
righteousness of God is revealed from FAITH to FAITH
— According to the PROPORTION of faith — According
as God hath dealt the MEASURE of faith. — If I have
told you of EARTHLY things, and ye BELIEVE not ; how
shall ye BELIEVE, if I tell you of HEAVENLY things ?
 — And can we read Heb. xi. without seeing, that
 the faith there described, is more general than the
 faith, which characterizes the *christian* dispensation ?
 By what art can we make appear, that Christ cruci-
 fied was the object of those believers, of whom the
 apostle says, *By faith Noah moved with fear built an*
ark : — By faith Isaac blessed Jacob AND ESAU [the
supposed reprobate] concerning things to come : — By
faith Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph : — By faith Joseph
gave commandment concerning his bones : — By faith the
harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not,
when she had received the spies ? If you insinuate with
 respect to Rahab, that Joshua sent the spies, whom
 she entertained, and that they informed her, that
 Joshua was a type of Christ crucified : will you not ren-
 der your “ orthodoxy ” as ridiculous, as if you rested
 it upon the frivolous difference there is between *if*
 and *if* ? Mr. B. cannot show, that the apostle ever

distinguished between a *jewish* IF, and a *christian* IF; but I can quote chapter and verse, when I assert, that he clearly distinguishes between *jewish* and *christian faith*. For, not to transcribe Heb. viii. and x. does he not say, Gal. iii. 23, BEFORE FAITH [i. e. before *christian* faith] came, we were kept under the law, i. e. under the *jewish* dispensation, and the obscurer faith peculiar to it: Nor was this a damnable state, for St. Paul begins the next chapter by telling us, that *The HEIR, as long as he is a CHILD, differeth nothing from a SERVANT, tho' he be LORD OF ALL; but is under tutors, and governors, till the time appointed of the Father: Even so we, when we were children* [when we were under the *jewish* dispensation] *were in bondage under the elements of this world. But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we* [children differing nothing from servants] *might receive the adoption of sons, i. e. the privileges of sons that are of age, and are no longer under tutors and governors. — For after that* (*christian*) *FAITH is come, we are no longer under a school-master, for we are all the* [emancipated] *children of God by FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS: Gal. iii. 25, 26.* Is it not evident from the comparing of these passages, that the faith of Jews constituted them children of God, but such children as in general differed nothing from servants — such children as were in a state of nonage and bondage: Whereas *christian* faith [emphatically called *faith*] by its superior privileges introduces true christians into the glorious liberty of the adult sons of God? Before we can overthrow this doctrine, must we not, to use St. Peter's words, *wrest our beloved brother Paul's words, so as to overthrow the FAITH of some, yea of all the Jews, that lived before faith came, i. e. before Christ brought believers from mount Sinai to mount Sion; from the earthly Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her children, to the new Jerusalem, which is free, and is the mother of us all — that stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath made*

made us free, and are not intangled again with the yoke of bondage?

The difference between the privileges of the jewish, and those of the christian faith and dispensation, is still more clearly described, 2 Cor. iii. There, the christian dispensation [*called the ministration of the Spirit, because the promise of the Spirit is its great privilege, see John vii. 39,*] is opposed to the jewish dispensation, which the apostle calls the *ministration of condemnation*, because it appointed no particular sacrifices for penitents guilty of adultery, idolatry, murder, blasphemy, &c. and absolutely doomed them to die. This severe dispensation, says St. Paul, *was glorious, tho' it is done away: much more that which remaineth [the christian dispensation] exceedeth in glory.* — Again, *Moses put a typical veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end, &c. and until this day the veil remaineth untaken away, &c. But we (Christians) all, with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory. What a privilege! And how many nominal christians live below it; yea below the privileges of the very Heathens!*

This however is the *one faith* of true christians, who *have the same spirit of faith*: It is *one*, in its great object, *God manifest in the flesh*—*one*, in its great promise, *the promise of the Father, or the kingdom in the Holy Ghost*—*one*, in its new commandment, brotherly, universal love, that *perfects* believers *in one*, and makes them partakers of *so great salvation*. — This is the faith, which St. Paul calls *the faith of God's elect*, i. e. the faith of christians, who are *chosen* above jewish believers to *see the glory of the Lord with open face*, when jewish believers see it only *darkly thro' a veil*: This very faith he calls immediately after the faith *common* to all Christians, *To Titus, my own son after the common faith*, Tit. i 1, 4. With an eye to *this* faith he likewise names *Timothy, his own son in the faith* — *which is in Christ Jesus*: A faith this, whereby Timothy, who was a jewish believer from a child, was *made partaker*

of Christ the great [i. e. the christian] *salvation*. — A faith, which St. Peter calls *like precious faith*, and St. Jude, a *most holy faith*; indirectly comparing it to the *most holy* place in the temple. — A faith, which Christ calls *MY faith*, Rev. ii. 13, and *faith that is in ME*, Acts xxvi. 18. — A faith this, far superior to the faith of the *noble* jewish believers in Berea, who so candidly searched the scriptures, when they had heard St. Paul preach — and very far exceeding the candid disposition of those sincere Heathens at Corinth, concerning whom our Lord said to St. Paul, † *I have much people in this city*. If the reader divests himself of prejudices, I hope, that, instead of calling the doctrine of the gospel dispensations, and the degrees of faith belonging to them, a “*novel chimera*,” he will embrace, receive it as a *truth*, which leads to a thousand others.

11. Some of my opponents, who find it easier to pass a jest than to answer an argument, will probably think, that to beat me and the doctrine of the dispensations out of the field of truth, they need only laugh at my “*inventing*” different sorts of faith “*by the dozen*.”

To nip this witticism in the bud, I declare ONCE MORE: That I make no more difference between the faith of a righteous Heathen, and the faith of a Father in Christ; than I do between day-break, and meridian light: — That the light of a sincere Jew, is as much one with the light of a sincere Christian; as the light of the sun in a cold, cloudy day, in March, is one with the light of the sun in a fine day, in May:

X 3

—And

† I prefer this sense to that of the Calvinists, not only because unconditional election to eternal glory appears to me an unscriptural doctrine; but because the apostle, having named the sins, in which *all wicked* Heathens lived, says to the Corinthians, *Not such were you ALL*, but *such were SOME of you*; intimating that *others* were of those righteous people, concerning whom our Lord speaks when he says, *Enquire who is worthy*. Let it be observed however that we do not rest our doctrine of free grace, upon this or upon any one scripture brought in by the bye, and rather by way of illustration than of proof. We have passages enough that are *full* to the point.

+ — And, that the difference between the saving faith peculiar to the sincere disciples of Noah, Moses, John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ, consists in a variety of *degrees*, and not in a diversity of *species*; saving faith under all the dispensations agreeing in the following essentials: (1) It is begotten by the revelation of some saving truth presented by free grace, impressed by the Spirit, and received by the believer's prevented free-agency: (2) It has the same original cause in all, that is, the mercy of God in Jesus Christ: (3) It *actually* saves all, tho' in various degrees: (4) It sets all upon *working righteousness*; some bearing fruit thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold: And (5) thro' Christ it will bring all that do not make shipwreck of it, to one or another of the *many mansions*, which our Lord is gone to prepare in heaven for his *believing, obedient* people, i. e. for those who get clear of practical *pharisaism* and *antinomianism*.

III. Should it be objected, that "The doctrine of this Essay confounds Faith and Works;" to what I have said on this head in the preceding Checks, I add:

+ — (1) There is an essential difference between the holy faith of Adam in a state of innocence; and the justifying, sanctifying faith of a penitent sinner: For Adam *only* stood and worked by faith in God as *Creator*; but we rise, stand, and work, *chiefly* by faith in God as *Redeemer* and *Sanctifier*. See the note p. 4. — (2) Adam worked upon the terms of the *first* covenant, which requires innocence and perfect obedience; and we work upon the terms of the *second*, which, for Christ's sake, admits the sincere obedience of penitential faith. Here is then no mixing of the covenants, no confounding of faith and works; but only a vindication of the works of faith, and a defending of the faith that works by love. See p. 61, note 21; p. 65, note 23; and p. 33, note 5. — (3) St. Augustine, the favourite Father of the Solifidians, wrote a Treatise (*De fide et operibus*) upon faith and works, in the 21st chapter of which, he has these words: "By believing in God
" with a right faith, by worshiping and knowing
X 3 " him,

" him, we are so far benefited (*ut et bene vivendi ob*
 " *illo sit nobis auxilium, et si peccaverimus ab illo in-*
 " *dulgentiam* MEREAMUR) as to obtain from him help
 " to live well, and to get of him" (for I must not
 literally translate the heretical word *mereamur*) " a
 " pardon, if we have sinned." — And chap. 23, he
 adds, "*Inseparabilis est bona vita a fide quæ per dilec-*
 " *tionem operatur: imo vero ea ipsa est bona vita: A*
 " good life is inseparable from the faith, which works
 " by love; nay, that faith itself is a good life." Had
 I spoken so unguardedly, there would be just room
 for raising the objection which I prevent; but I have
 carefully distinguished between faith and works; re-
 presenting faith as the *beating of the heart*, and works
 as the *pulses* caused thereby; and holding forth faith
 as the *root*, and works as the *fruit* of evangelical obe-
 dience. See p. 180, &c.

IV. If some readers think that my views of *Truth*
 are *singular*, I reply, that when I have reason and
 scripture on my side, I am not afraid of *singularity*.
 However, as I should be glad to obviate even this ob-
 jection, I shall present the reader with the sentiments
 of two of the most judicious divines of the last cen-
 tury, Mr. Flavel and Mr. Goodwin.

Mr. Flavel says in his *Discourse on mental Errors*,
 ' Truth † is the proper object, the natural and plea-
 ' sant food of the understanding. *Doth not the ear*
 ' (that is, the understanding by the ear) *try words,*
 ' *as the mouth tasteth meat?* — The minds of all that
 ' are not wholly immersed in sensuality, spend their
 ' strength in the laborious search and pursuit of Truth.
 ' — Fervent prayer, sedulous study, fixed meditations,
 ' are the labours of inquisitive souls after Truth. —
 ' Answerable to the sharpness of the mind's appetite,
 ' is the fine edge of pleasure and delight it feels in
 ' the discovery and acquisition of Truth. — If Archi-
 ' medes, upon the discovery of a mathematical truth
 ' was so ravished, that he cried out *Eureka, Eureka*, I
 ' have found it, I have found it; what pleasure must
 ' the

† I produce this as an EXTRACT, and not as a *continued quotation*.

' the discovery of a divine Truth give to a sanctified
 ' soul ! *Thy words were found of me, says Jeremiah,*
 ' *and I did eat them ; and thy word was to me the joy*
 ' *and rejoicing of my heart.*—Truth lies deep, *Veritas*
 ' *in puteo,* ' as the rich veins of gold do ; if we will
 ' get the treasure, we must not only *beg* but *dig* also.
 ' —We are not to take up with what lies uppermost,
 ' and next at hand upon the surface. — *Be ye trans-*
 ' *formed by the renewing of your mind, that you may*
 ' *prove what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will*
 ' *of God.* — It is a very great judgment of God to be
 ' given over to an erroneous mind. For the under-
 ' standing being the leading faculty, as that guides,
 ' the other powers of the soul follow ; as horses in a
 ' team follow the fore-horse. Now how sad and dan-
 ' gerous a thing is this, for Satan to ride the fore-
 ' horse, and guide that, which is to guide the life of
 ' man ? That is a dreadful, spiritual, judicial stroke
 ' of God, which we read of Rom. 1. 26. — 2 Thes.
 ' ii. 10. *Because they received not the love of the Truth,*
 ' *God gave them up to strong delusions.* They are justly
 ' plagued with Error, that slight truth. — Besides,
 ' what shame and trouble must it be to the zealous
 ' promoters of errors, not only to cast away their own
 ' time and strength, but also to ensnare and allure
 ' the souls of others into the same, or worse mischief :
 ' for tho' God may save and recover you, those that
 ' have been misled by you, may perish.'

Mr. Goodwin thus confirms Mr. Flavel's noble tes-
 timony, in the preface to his *Redemption Redeemed.*

' TRUTH is for the understanding, and the under-
 ' standing for Truth — Truth, especially in things of
 ' a supernatural concernment, the knowledge whereof
 ' faceth eternity, &c. being nothing else (interpre-
 ' tative'y) but God himself prepared, of, and by, him-
 ' self, for a beatifical union with the understanding,
 ' and from hence, with the heart and affections of
 ' men ; ERROR, in things of this high import, can
 ' be nothing else but SATAN, contriving and distilling
 ' himself into a notion, or impression likely to be ad-
 ' mitted

'mitted by the understanding, under the appearance
 'and in the name of *Truth*, into union with itself,
 'and by means hereof, into union with the heart of
 'men. — All Error (of that kind I now speak of)
 'being seated in the understanding, secretly and by
 'degrees infuseth a proportionable malignity into
 'the will and affections, and occasioneth unholy dis-
 'positions. Error is the great Troubler of the world.
 'It is that fountain of death, that sendeth out all
 'those streams of sin, which overflow the earth. —
 'Why do men so universally walk in ways of op-
 'pression, deceit, drunkenness, uncleanness, envy,
 'pride, &c. but because they judge such ways as
 'these (all circumstances considered) more desirable
 'to them, than ways of a contrary import. And what
 'is this, but a most horrid error and mistake, the re-
 'sult of those lying apprehensions concerning God,
 'wherewith men willingly suffer their minds to be
 'corrupted even to spiritual putrefaction. — Neither
 'could the Devil have touched Adam or Eve but by
 'the mediation of some erroneous notion or other,
 'concerning God.' — And in his dedicatory epistle
 to the University of Cambridge he hath this fine
 thought, which I address to my readers, 'If you con-
 'demn, who will justify? Only God's eldest Daugh-
 'ter, TRUTH, has one mightier than *you* on her side,
 'who will justify her in due time, tho' you should
 'condemn her; and will raise her up from the dead
 'the third day, in case you shall slay her.'

V. "By granting, that people, who are under
 "dispensations inferior to christianity in its state of
 "perfection, may have a degree of saving faith,
 "altho' they have not yet the luminous faith of
 "christian believers; you damp the exertion of *seek-*
 "ers; and invite them to settle, as most dissenters
 "do, in a lukewarm, Laodicean state, short of as-
 "surance and *the kingdom of God*, which consists not
 "only in *righteousness*, but in *peace and joy by the*
 "*Holy Ghost*."

If

If this objection could not be answered, I would burn my Essay; for I had much rather, it should feed my fire, than the Laodicean spirit, which is already so predominant in the church: But, that this new difficulty is by no means unanswerable, will appear, I hope, by the following observations.

(1) Judicious Mr. Baxter, by a variety of strong arguments, shows, that to represent assurance, or the kingdom of God in the Holy Ghost, as essential to all true faith; and promiscuously to shut up in a state of damnation all those, to whom that *kingdom* is not yet *come with power*, is both cruel and unscriptural. See the arguments in his *Confession of Faith*, from p. 189 to 214.

(2) Ought we to keep from those, who sincerely seek the kingdom of God, the comfort that the gospel allows them? Are not *they, that seek the Lord*, commanded to *rejoice*? And how can they do it, if *the wrath of God abideth on them*, as it certainly does on all *absolute* unbelievers? Did not our Lord and St. Peter speak in a more evangelical strain, when they said to sincere seekers, *Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom of grace, as well as that of glory.* — *The promise of the kingdom in the Holy Ghost is unto you, and to your children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call to believe explicitly in Jesus Christ?*

(3) When Joshua urged the Israelites to cross Jordan, would he have done right, if he had made them believe, that they were still in Egypt, and had not yet taken one true step towards Canaan? Did he not encourage them to go up, and to possess the good land by the very consideration, which my objector supposes would have made them sit down in the wilderness? Nay, did not those, who had already taken possession of the kingdoms of Ogg and Sihon, on the other side Jordan, cross that river first, and nobly lead the van, when their brethren went on from conquering to conquer? And why should not spiritual Israelites, who turn their back upon spiritual Egypt, and
seek

seek the kingdom of God, be led on *from faith to faith*, in the same comfortable manner ?

(4) It is trifling to say, “ *Dead Dissenters*, and the *formal* Scotch clergy, preach up a faith short of christian assurance, and therefore such a faith is a dangerous chimera ;” for if they preach it in an unguarded, or in a careless manner, to set aside and not to illustrate the doctrine of *christian* faith, they do the devil’s work, and not the work of evangelists ; what wonder is it then, that such preaching should lull their congregations asleep ?—Again, if we ought not to give up the doctrine of *sincere obedience* and *good works*, tho’ our opponents cry out perpetually, “ It is the doctrine of all the carnal clergy in the kingdom :” — and if it is our duty to maintain the doctrine of the *Trinity*, tho’ Dr. Priestley and all the unitarians say with great truth, That “ It is the doctrine of the superstitious Papists ;” how absurd is it to urge, that our doctrine concerning a faith inferior to the faith of assurance, is false, merely because the objector says, that this part of our doctrine is held by all the *sleepy* Dissenters ? Might we not, at this rate, be also ashamed of the doctrine of the divine Unity, which the Socinians, the Jews, and even the Turks hold as well as we ?

(5) Are there not many pious and judicious ministers, in the churches of England and Scotland, as well as among the Dissenters, who dare not countenance the present revival of the power of godliness, chiefly because they hear us sometimes unguardedly assert, that none have any faith, but such as have the faith of assurance ; and that the wrath of God actually abides on all those, who have not that faith ? If we warily allowed the faith of the inferior dispensations, which such divines clearly see in the scriptures, and feel in themselves ; would not their prejudices be softened, and their minds prepared to receive what we advance in defence of the faith of assurance ?

(6) If it is urged, that the Spirit of God witnesses to all sincere seekers of the kingdom in the Holy Ghost,

Ghost, that they are in a damnable state, till they feel the pardoning love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them; I demand proof; I deny the fact, and assert, that the divine Spirit can no more witness to an *accepted*, mourning Cornelius, that he is *not accepted* in any sense, than it can witness to a palpable contradiction. The truth is, Our unbelieving fears and awakened hearts are very prone to surmise the worst, and we are very apt to take their surmisings for divine impressions, even when we *bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*. I doubt not but St. Paul himself, in his agony of penitential grief, when he spent three days and three nights in fasting and prayer, had many such gloomy despairing thoughts; but they were certainly lying thoughts, as well as those, which David wisely checks in some of his psalms. Who will dare to say, that Ananias found the apostle in a *damnable state*, tho' he found him without the sense of sin forgiven, as appears from the direction which he gave him, *Arise, why tarriest thou? Why starvest thou thyself to death? Wash away thy sins, calling upon*, and consequently BELIEVING in the name of the Lord?

(7) My objector's argument is as much levelled at St. Paul's doctrine, as at my Essay. *Men and brethren*, &c. said he to his audience at Antioch, *whosoever among you FEARETH God, to you is the word of THIS SALVATION sent*, Acts xiii. 26. But none of the *pious* hearers, whom he thus addressed, were unwise enough to reply, 'Thou acknowledgest that we *fear God*; and David says, *BLESSED is the man, that FEARETH the Lord*: Now, if we fear him, and are *blessed*, we are already in a state of salvation, and therefore need not "THIS SALVATION" which thou preachest. If we see our way by the candle of Moses, as thou intimatest, what need is there, that *the sun of righteousness should arise upon us with healing in his wings*?' I demand proof therefore, that men, who *fear God* in our day, are readier to draw pernicious inferences

inferences from the doctrine of the dispensations, than they were in St. Paul's time.

(8) The objection which I answer, may with equal propriety be urged against St. Peter's doctrine. Acts ii. 5, and x. 7, we read of DEVOUT men out of every nation under heaven, and of a DEVOUT soldier, that waited continually on Cornelius, who himself feared God, worked righteousness, and was accepted—with all his house. By Acts xi. 9, 14. it evidently appears, that tho' Cornelius was cleansed by God himself, yet he must send for Peter, who was to tell him words whereby he and all his house SHOULD BE SAVED, i. e. should become partakers of the GREAT salvation revealed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. But altho' St. Peter began his discourse by acknowledging, that his pious hearers were accepted with God, none of the congregation said: Well, if we are accepted, we are already in a state of salvation, and therefore we need not hear words, whereby we shall be saved. On the contrary, they all BELIEVED the word of THIS fuller salvation; for the Holy Ghost fell on ALL them, that heard the word, and St. Paul informs us, that we receive the Spirit by the hearing of FAITH. Compare Acts x. 44, with Gal. ii. 3, and John vii. 39. It is plain, from this account, that no preaching was ever attended with a more universal blessing, and that no discourse was ever more instrumental in conveying to all, the power of the faith of assurance, than that very sermon, which the apostle began by intimating, that his hearers were already accepted, according to an inferior dispensation. Hence it is evident, that the doctrine we maintain, if it is properly guarded, far from having a necessary tendency to lull people asleep, is admirably calculated to excite every penitent to faith, prayer, the improvement of their talent, and the perfecting of holiness.

(9) May we not sufficiently guard the christian dispensation, by constantly affirming: (1) That all christian believers have now the witness in themselves: — (2) That those, who have it not, either never had
christian

christian faith, which is emphatically called *faith* in the gospel, [see Acts xiv. 27.] or, that they know only *the baptism of John*; or, that with the unsettled Galatians, they are actually *fallen from grace*, i. e. from the christian dispensation; and now live *under the law*, i. e. in the darkness of the jewish dispensation; supposing they are not quite departed from God by indulging known sin. — (3) That if they do not press after the faith of assurance, they are in the utmost danger of losing their talent of grace; like the young man, whom Jesus loved, and who nevertheless went away sorrowful, when he was unwilling to give up all, and follow Jesus without reserve; or like those thousands of Israelites, *whom the Lord saved out of the land of Egypt, and whom he afterwards destroyed*, when *they believed not the word*, by which they were to be *saved into the land of promise*? Jude 5.

(10) Not to mention all the arguments, by which the zealous puritans defended the doctrine of assurance in the last century, and those by which the Methodists prove its *necessity* in our days; is not the first argument used in my address to the anti-christian moralist, p. 215, sufficient, if it is properly managed, to enforce the absolute *necessity* of rising to higher dispensations, when God calls us to it? If queen Vashti lost her crown, for *refusing to come to the royal banquet, at the king's commandment*: — If those, who *begged to be excused*, when they were invited to the gospel-feast, were at last dreadfully punished: — If St. Paul says to loitering believers, who are backward to go on to perfection, *How shall we escape if we neglect so GREAT salvation, which at FIRST began to be spoken by the Lord*: — Nay, if Christ himself threatens to *spue lukewarm, slothful Laodiceans out of his mouth*; do we want even *terrifying* arguments to lash the consciences of those carnal professors, who, hoping they are perfectly safe in their *low attainments*, despise *higher dispensations*, and *bury their talent of grace*, till it is *taken from them, and given to those who best improve their own*? To conclude,

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(11) You

(11) You are afraid, that the doctrine of this Essay will make "*Seekers*" rest in Laodicean lukewarmness; but, permit me to observe, that the *Seekers* you speak of, are either forward hypocrites, or sincere penitents: — If they are *forward hypocrites*, preaching to them the *faith of assurance* will never make them either humble or sincere. On the contrary, they will probably catch at an *election*, and then at an *assurance* of their own making; and so they will profess to have the *faith*, for which you contend, when in fact they have only the name and notion of it. The religious world swarms with instances of this kind.—If, on the other hand, the *Seekers* for whom you seem concerned, are *sincere penitents*; far from being hurt, they will be greatly benefited by our doctrine: for it will at once keep them from chilling, despairing fears; and from false, Crispian comforts; the two opposite extremes, into which upright, unwary mourners are most apt to run. Thus our doctrine, instead of being dangerous to sincere seekers, will prove a scriptural clue, in following which they will happily avoid the gloomy haunts of *pharisaic* Despair, and the enchanted ground of *antinomian* Presumption.

THE END.



S E C O N D A P P E N D I X.

Containing, (1) *Ten more Arguments to prove, that all men universally, in the day of their visitation, have SOME gracious power to believe SOME saving truth.*
 —And (2) *An answer to three more objections.*

BEING conscious that I cannot be too careful, and guarded, in writing upon so important, and delicate a subject as that of the preceding Essay; I once more take up the pen to explain, strengthen, and guard the doctrine that it contains.

I. I have said p. 143 that *Faith* [considered in general] is *believing heartily*; I add, *and sometimes it may signify a power to believe heartily*. For, as God gives to all the heathens in the day of their visitation, a power to believe heartily that *God is*, &c. indulging them with gracious calls and opportunities to use that power; we may say, that he gives them *the faith* of their dispensation. Nevertheless all the heathens have not *that* faith: For many obstinately bury their talent, till at last it is taken from them.

As this doctrine of *faith* entirely subverts the doctrine of *finished damnation*, which is so closely connected with the doctrines of *absolute election*, and finished salvation: and as a Calvinist clergyman, who has seen part of this Essay, assures me that it shall be taken notice of; I beg leave to add the following arguments to those, which I have produced p. 145, to prove, that *Faith is not* the work of God in the sense of our adversaries, and that in the day of salvation, thro' *the free gift, which is come upon all men*, we have all *some* gracious power to believe *some* saving truth.

(1) If faith is the work of God in the same sense, in which the creation is his performance, when Christ *marvelled at the Centurion's faith*, he marvelled, that God should be able to do what he pleases, or that a man should do what he can no more help doing, than

Z

he

he can hinder the world from existing : That is, he marvelled at what was not at all marvellous : and he might as well have wondered that a tun should outweigh an ounce.

(2) When God invites *EVERY creature in all the world* to believe, [Mark xvi. 15.] if he denies most of them power so to do, he insults over their wretched impotence, and acts a part which can hardly be reconciled with sincerity. What would the world think of the king, if he perpetually invited *all* the Irish poor over to England to partake of his royal charity, and took care that *most* of them should *never* meet with any vessels to bring them over, but such as would be sure to founder in the passage.

(3) When our Lord endeavoured to shame the pharisees for their unbelief, he said, *John came to you, &c. and ye believed him not, but the publicans and harlots believed him : and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterwards, that ye might believe.* But if faith is the work of God in the sense of our adversaries, was it any shame to the pharisees, that God would not do *his own* work ? Had they any more reason to blush at it, than we have to redden, because God does not give us wings and fins as he does to birds and fishes ?

(4) To suppose that Christ assiduously preached the gospel to the inhabitants of Capernaum, whilst all the time he withheld from them power to believe it, and that afterwards he appointed them a *more intolerable* damnation for not believing : — To suppose this, I say, is to cast the most horrible reflection upon the Lamb of God. But if it is allowed, that those obstinate unbelievers will *justly* be sent into a *more dreadful* hell, for having buried to the end their talent of power to believe in their *stronger* light ; is it not reasonable to suppose, that those who shall go to a *less* intolerable hell, will also be sent there for having finally refused to use their talent of power to believe in their *weaker* light ?

(5) Altho' Christ positively says, that men shall be damned for their unbelief : [See John iii. 18, Mark xvi.

xvi. 16.] yet, some of our adversaries deny it; being deservedly-ashamed of representing our Lord as damning myriads of men for not doing what is absolutely impossible. Hence they tell us, that reprobates shall be damned only for their *sins*. But this unscriptural contrivance does not mend the matter; for I have shewn, Section vii, that bad works, or sins, *necessarily* flow from unbelief. Now, unbelief being nothing but the absence of faith; God, by absolutely withholding all saving faith, *necessarily* causes all unbelief; and unbelief, by *necessarily* causing all sin, *necessarily* causes also all damnation. For he that absolutely withholdeth all light, *necessarily* causes all darkness, and of course all the works of darkness. Thus “*the doctrines of grace*” [so called] that seem to rear their *graceful* head to heaven, end in the *graceless*, venomous tail of *finished damnation*. “*Definit in piscem mulier formosa superne.*”

(6) The design of the gospel, with regard to God, is evidently to *extol his grace*, and *clear his justice*. Now, if an absolute decree of preterition, or limited redemption, hinders a vast majority of mankind from believing to salvation, both those ends of the gospel are entirely defeated in all that perish: For God, by passing by the reprobated culprits thousands of years before they were born, and by withholding every dram of *saving grace* from them, shows himself an *absolutely-graceless* Creator to them all. Nor does this opinion less horribly impeach God's *justice* than his *grace*; for it represents him as judicially sentencing men to eternal torments, merely for the sin of a man whom most of them never heard of; or, which is all one, for the *necessary, unavoidable, pre-ordained* consequences of that sin.

(7) St. Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, takes particular care to clear God's justice with respect to the condemnation of the wicked, *that every mouth may be stopped*—and [*εἰς τὸ εἰναι*] *that they may be without excuse*. But the scheme which I oppose, instead of leaving men *ἀναπολογητὸς without excuse*, opens their

mouths, and fills them with the best *apology* in the world, "*Absolute necessity, and complete impossibility, caused by another before we were born :*" An apology this, which no candid person can ever object to.

(8) Agreeably to St. Paul's doctrine our Lord observes, that the man sentenced to be cast into outer darkness for *not having on a wedding garment, was speechless*. But if the Crispian doctrines of grace are true, might not that man, with the greatest propriety, have said to the Master of the feast, while the executioners *bound him hand and foot* ? " To all eternity I shall impeach thy justice, O thou partial judge. Thou appointest me the hell of hypocrites, merely because *I have not on a wedding garment*, which thou hast from all eternity purposely kept from me, under the strong lock and key of thy irreversible decrees. Is this the manner in which thou judgest the world in righteousness ? "

(9) The parable of the *talents*, and that of the *pounds* decide the question. The wicked and slothful servants, whose destruction they inform us of, are not condemned because their master was " hard and austere : " but because the one had *buried his talent* of power in the earth, and the other had *hid his pound* of grace in a *napkin* manufactured at Laodicea.

(10) If salvation depends upon faith, and if God never gives reprobates power to *believe in the light that enlightens every man*, and a sufficiency of means so to do ; it follows, that he never gives them any *personal* ability to escape damnation ; but only to secure and increase their damnation : and thus he deals far harder with them than he did with devils. For Satan and his angels were all *personally* put in a state of initial salvation, and endued with a *personal* ability to do that, on which their eternal salvation depended. To suppose therefore, that a majority of the children of Adam, who are born sinful without any *personal* fault of their own, and who can say to the *incarnate* Son of God, Thou art flesh of our flesh, blood of our blood, and bone of our bone — to suppose, I say, that a vast majority of these favoured creatures have far less fa-

your shown them, than Beelzebub himself had, is so graceless, so unevangelical a doctrine, that one might be tempted to think, it is ironically called the doctrine of grace; and to suspect, that its defenders are stiled "evangelical ministers" by way of burlesque.

From the preceding arguments I conclude, that, when it is said in the scriptures, people COULD NOT believe, this is to be understood, either of persons, whose day of grace was over, and who of course were justly given up to a reprobate mind, as the men mentioned Rom. i. 21, 28: Or of persons, who, by not using their one talent of power to believe the obvious truths belonging to a lower dispensation, absolutely incapacitated themselves to believe the deep truths belonging to christianity.

* * * * *

II. Altho' I flatter myself, that the preceding arguments guard the doctrine of *free-grace* against the attacks of those, who indirectly contend for *free-wrath*; I dare not yet conclude this appendix. Still fearful lest some difficulty unremoved will prejudice the candid reader against what appears to me to be the truth, I beg leave to intrude upon his patience, by answering three more plausible objections to the doctrine of this Essay.

OBJ. VI. "If faith is the gift of the God of GRACE to us, as sight is the gift of the God of NATURE, according to your assertion, p. 146; does it not follow, that as we may see when we will, so we may believe in Christ — believe the forgiveness of our sins; and, by that means, fill ourselves with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost when we have a mind? But is not this contrary to experience? Do not the best christians remember a time, when they could no more believe than they could make a world, tho' they prayed for faith with all the ardor they were capable of?"

ANS. (1) You still seem to take it for granted, that there is no true faith, but an explicit faith IN CHRIST;

and no explicit faith in Christ, but the *faith of full assurance*. But I hope, that I have already proved the contrary in my answer to the Vth objection, p. 237. There are two extremes in the doctrine of faith, which should be carefully avoided by every christian: The one is that of the Author of P. O. who thinks, that an adulterous murderer may have true, saving faith in the height of his complicated crimes: And the other is that of Mr. Jonathan Ketlow, who asserts, There is no saving faith but that which has actually cleansed us from all inbred sin, and opened a present heaven in our breast. The middle path of truth lies exactly between the opposite mistakes of those two good men; and that path I endeavour to point out.

As on the one hand it never came into my mind, that an impenitent murderer can have even the saving faith of a heathen: so on the other hand it never entered my thoughts, that a penitent can believe with the faith of full assurance when he will: For *this* faith depends not only upon our general belief of the truth revealed to us, but also upon a peculiar † *operation of God*

† Mr. Wesley exactly describes *this faith* in his sermon on *Scriptural Christianity*, of which you have here an extract. 'By *THIS faith* of the operation of God, which was the very substance or subsistence of things hoped for, the demonstrative evidence of invisible things, he' (the penitent pricked to the heart, and expecting the promise of the Father) 'instantly received the Spirit of adoption, whereby he now cried *Abba, Father!* Now first it was that he could call Jesus Lord by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit itself bearing witness with his spirit that he was a child of God. Now it was that he could truly say, *I live not but Christ liveth in me, &c.* — His soul magnified the Lord, and his spirit rejoiced in God his Saviour. He rejoiced in him with joy unspeakable, who had reconciled him to God, even the Father: in whom he had redemption thro' his blood, the forgiveness of sins. He rejoiced in that witness of God's Spirit with his spirit, that he was a child of God: and more abundantly in hope of the glory of God, &c. The Love of God was also shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which was given to him. Because he was a son, God had sent forth the Spirit of his Son crying *Abba, Father!* And that filial love of God was continually increased by the witness he had in himself, of God's pardoning love to him, &c. so that God was the desire of his eyes, and the joy of

God, or revelation of his powerful arm. It is always attended with a manifestation of the spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And such a manifestation, God in general grants to none but them, that groan deeply under the spirit of bondage unto fear, as Paul did while he remained blind at Damascus; — or them that are peculiarly faithful to the grace of their inferior dispensation, and pray as earnestly for power from on high, as the apostles did after our Lord's ascension.

Therefore, from my asserting, p. 151, that “ So long as the day of salvation continues, all sinners, who have

‘ of his heart; his portion in time and in eternity, &c. He that thus loved God, could not but love his brother also, &c. This lover of God embraced all mankind for his sake, &c. not excepting the evil and unthankful, and least of all his enemies, &c. These had a peculiar place both in his heart and his prayers. He loved them even as Christ loved us, &c. By the same almighty love was he saved; both from passion and pride, from lust and vanity, from ambition and covetousness, and from every temper which was not in Christ, &c. He spake evil of no man; nor did an unkind word ever come out of his lips, &c. He daily grew in grace, increasing in strength, in the knowledge, and love of God, &c. He visited and assisted them that were sick or in prison, &c. He gave all his goods to feed the poor. He rejoiced to labour or to suffer for them; and whereinsoever he might profit another, there especially to deny himself. — Such was Christianity in its rise, [i. e. christianity contradistinguished from the dispensation called the baptism of John.] ‘ Such was a christian in ancient days’ [i. e. a christian contradistinguished from a disciple of John, or of Christ, before the dispensation of the Holy Ghost took place.] ‘ Such was every one of those, who, when they heard the threatnings of the chief priests and elders, lift up their voice to God with one accord, and were all filled with the Holy Ghost.’

I here set my seal to this scriptural description of spiritual christianity; being fully persuaded of two things: (1) That till a man is thus born of the Spirit, he cannot see the christian kingdom of God: — he cannot be under that glorious dispensation of divine grace, which Christ and the apostles spake of, when they preached, Repent, and believe the Gospel, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (2) That whosoever has not in his breast the above-described kingdom, i. e. righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and does not bring forth its excellent-fruits in his life, either never was a spiritual christian, or is fallen back from the ministration of the spirit into the dispensation of the letter, or the bare form of godliness, if not into open wickedness. See the next Note.

“ have not yet finally hardened themselves, may day and night [thro’ the help and power of the general light of Christ’s GRACE mentioned John i. 9, and Tit. ii. 11.] receive SOME truth belonging to the everlasting gospel,] which takes in the dispensation OF THE HEATHENS; from my asserting this, I say, you have no reason to infer, that I maintain, any man may day and night believe the forgiveness of his sins, and the deep truths of the gospel OF CHRIST; especially since I mention immediately what truth it is, which all may believe, if they improve their talent, namely this: “ *There is a God, who will call us to an account for our sins, and who spares us to break them off by repentance.*”

(2) It would be absurd to suppose, that you can believe with the *luminous faith of assurance*, when God is casting your soul into the dark prison of your own guilt, to bring down your pharisaic looks, and make you feel the chains of your sins. But even then, may you not “ *believe, that God is*” just, holy, and patient? May you not acknowledge, that you deserve your spiritual imprisonment far more than Joseph’s brethren deserved to be put all together into ward three days by their loving, forgiving brother? May you not believe that, altho’ *heaviness may endure for a night, yet joy cometh in the morning*? And when you have humbly groaned with David, *I am so fast in prison that I cannot get forth*; may you not pray in faith, *Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: Let the bones which thou hast broken rejoice*: Give me the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness: Convince me as powerfully of righteousness, as thou hast of sin: And let thy Spirit, which now acts upon me as a spirit of bondage unto fear, begin to act as a spirit of adoption, and liberty; of righteousness, peace, and joy? — May you not even add, “ *O God, I believe thy promise concerning the coming of the Comforter; help thou my unbelief, and grant me such a faith as thou wilt vouchsafe to seal with that holy spirit of promise. Thou shakest before me the rod of infernal vengeance; I deserve it a thousand times; but, O Father of mercies, O* my

‘ *my Father*, if for the sake of thine only begotten Son, thou wilt yet permit such a wretch as I am to call thee *Father*, give me the spirit of adoption; and witness to my spirit, that I am a child of thine. But if thou wilt still hide thy face from me, never suffer me to entertain one dishonourable thought of thee; never let me think thee a Moloch. Tho’ thy justice slay me, let me still trust in thee, and believe, that for Christ’s sake thy mercy will revive my soul?’ Is it scriptural to rank among absolute unbelievers, a penitent who thus humbly and obediently waits for the faith of full assurance—the faith of christianity in its state of perfection? If our Lord pronounces such mourners *blessed*, does it become us to pronounce them *accursed*? but I return to your objection.

(3) The latter part of it confirms, instead of overturning my doctrine; it being evident, that if the persons you speak of, *prayed with ardor for the faith of assurance*, they had already *some degree of faith*; for praying is *calling upon the Lord*, and St. Paul speaks the words of *soberness*, where he says, *How shall they call upon him, in whom they have not believed?*

(4) I am so far from thinking, our power to believe is *absolute*, that I have asserted, p. 152, “*it is impossible*” heartily to believe the truths, which do not suit our present state:—And p. 168, 169, 179, I have observed, that we savingly believe the “*truth suitable to our present circumstances, when it is kindly presented by FREE GRACE, and affectionately embraced by PREVENTED free-will;*” adding that, when we believe, our “*faith is more or less operative,*” not only “*according to the EARNESTNESS with which we,*” (i. e. our *prevented free-will*) “*welcome the truth to our inmost souls;*” but also, “*according to the POWER with which the spirit of grace impresses it upon our hearts.*”—Nay, I have ascribed so much to the power of the free grace, by which saving faith is “*instantly formed,*” as to insinuate that sometimes [as at St. Paul’s

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† See p. 168, last line but two.

conversion] this power for a while bears all down before it. This at least was my meaning, when I said p. 147, "*We may IN GENERAL suspend the act of faith, ESPECIALLY when the glaring light*" [i. e. the luminous power] "*that sometimes accompanies the revelation of truth, is abated.*" Consider the force of the words, "*in general,*" and "*especially;*" advert to the exceptions for which they make room; and you will see, I allow, that free-grace, AT TIMES, acts with almost as much irresistibility, as some moderate bound-willers contend for.

(5) With respect to my comparison between our power to *believe*, and our power to *see*, far from showing that all men may at any time believe the gospel OF CHRIST, it intimates, nay, it proves the very reverse. Can you see *when* you will, and *what* you will? Can you see in a dark night without a light? Can you see in a bright day, when a thick veil covers your face? Can you see, if you place an opaque body full in your light? Can you see what is out of the reach of your eyes? Can you see the *rising* sun, when you look full *west*, or the stars when you pore upon a dunghill? Can you see when you obstinately shut your eyes? Or when you have let a wicked man put them out, lest you should not live in idleness? Apply to *faith* these queries about *sight*; recollect the preceding observations; and you will perceive: (1) That our power to believe is various ways *incircumscribed*; it being impossible, that he, who has but one talent, perhaps unimproved, should carry on as extensive a trade, as the man who diligently improves his five or ten talents: (2) That nevertheless, supposing we have still a ray of the light of truth, and have not yet been given up to judicial blindness, or to final hardness, we may day and night [if we do not still bury our talent] believe, by the above-mentioned helps, *some obvious* truth belonging to the *lowest* dispensation of divine grace, and begin to follow our Lord's direction; *While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light:* And

(3) That if we oppose this doctrine, we begin to sneak after our Calvinist brethren into *Crispianity*, and are just ready to bow at the shrine of the great *Diana* of the day, and to kiss her iron-clay feet, *Finished salvation*, and *Finished damnation*.

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OBJ. VII. " Your doctrine concerning the *school* of Faith, and its several *forms* — concerning the *temple* of Faith, and its capital *partitions*, is entirely founded upon the doctrine of the *dispensations* of divine grace; a doctrine this, which many people will rank with what they call, *The novel chimeras of your Chetks.*"

I hope, that I have proved what I have advanced concerning the dispensations, by arguments founded upon scripture, reason, and conscience. However, that the idea of *novelty* may not stand in the way of any of my readers, out of fifty authors, whom I might quote in support of this important doctrine, I shall produce two, a calvinist and an anti-calvinist; not doubting, but their consentaneous testimony will sufficiently break the force of your objection. The first is the Rev. Mr. Green, late curate of Thurnscoe in Yorkshire, and once an assistant to Mr. Whitefield. In his book, called *Grace and Truth vindicated*, p. 116, you will find the following just remarks:

" It appears to me from *scripture*, as well as *experience*, that there are divers dispensations, but the same spirit: *The kingdom of heaven consists of various degrees, and different mansions.* This is true, whether by the kingdom of heaven we understand the outward professors of religion and their privileges, the inward kingdom of grace, or the kingdom of glory: (in all which senses the words in scripture are frequently used.) — As face answers to face in a glass, so do these respectively answer each other. Thus the outward privileges of religion from Adam to

• Moses

‘ Moses were *least* ; from Moses to Christ *greater*, and
 ‘ from Christ to the restitution of all things, *greatest*.
 ‘ —Again, to be a spiritual or *enlightened* HEATHEN,
 ‘ as Socrates, Plato, or Cornelius before he heard
 ‘ Peter, is one degree or dispensation of grace. To
 ‘ be a spiritual or *enlightened* JEW ; and with Peter
 ‘ and the other disciples before the day of pentecost,
 ‘ to believe and acknowledge, that Jesus is the Mes-
 ‘ siah, tho’ not *spiritually* come, is a greater. But to
 ‘ be a *spiritual* CHRISTIAN, to have Christ, the ex-
 ‘ alted God-man revealed in us from heaven, and to
 ‘ be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise unto the
 ‘ day of the redemption of this vile body, is the last
 ‘ and most perfect dispensation of grace. He that is
 ‘ feeble here, shall be as David, and he that is strong,
 ‘ &c. shall be, &c. as the angel of the Lord, &c. For
 ‘ it may be observed, that every dispensation admits
 ‘ of a growth therein ; and moreover, that each of
 ‘ them is in some sort and degree experienced by a
 ‘ spiritual christian, &c.’

My second witness is the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley, who
 even in his *first* sermon on *Salvation by faith*, preach-
 ed near forty years ago, clearly distinguishes christian
 faith properly so called, or *faith in Christ* glorified,
 not only from the faith of an heathen, but also from
 the faith of initial christianity, i. e. “ *the faith which*
the apostles had while our Lord was upon earth.”

‘ And first, says he, it’ [*the faith that saves us into*
the great salvation described in the second part of the ser-
mon] ‘ is not barely the faith of an heathen. Now
 ‘ God requires of an heathen to believe, *That God is,*
 ‘ *that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,*
 ‘ &c. by *glorifying him as God,* &c. and by a careful
 ‘ practice of moral virtue, &c. A Greek or Roman
 ‘ therefore, yea, a Scythian or Indian, was without
 ‘ excuse, if he did not believe thus much ; The being
 ‘ and attributes of God, a future state of reward and
 ‘ punishment, &c. For this is barely *the faith of a*
 ‘ *heathen.*’—Soon after he adds : ‘ And herein does it’
 [*this faith in Christ glorified*] ‘ differ from that faith,
 ‘ which

‘ which the apostles themselves had while our Lord
 ‘ was upon earth, that it acknowledges the necessity
 ‘ and merit of his death, and the power of his resur-
 ‘ rection.’

The doctrine of *christian* perfection is entirely
 founded on the privileges of the *christian* dispensa-
 tion in its fulness: privileges these, which far ex-
 ceed those of the jewish œconomy, and the baptism of
 John. Accordingly Mr. Wesley in his sermon on *chris-
 tian perfection* makes the following just and scriptural
 distinction between those dispensations. ‘ It may be
 ‘ granted, (1) That David in the general course of
 ‘ his life, was one of the holiest men among the Jews.
 ‘ And, (2) That the holiest men among the Jews did
 ‘ sometimes commit sin. But if you would hence in-
 ‘ fer, that all christians do, and must commit sin, as
 ‘ long as they live: this consequence we utterly de-
 ‘ ny. It will never follow from those premises. Those
 ‘ who argue thus, seem never to have considered that
 ‘ declaration of our Lord, Mat. xi. 11, *Verily I say*
 ‘ *unto you, among them that are born of women, there*
 ‘ *hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist. Not-*
 ‘ *withstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven*
 ‘ *is greater than he.* I fear indeed, there are some,
 ‘ who have imagined *the kingdom of heaven* here to
 ‘ mean the kingdom of glory: As if the Son of God
 ‘ had just discovered to us, that the least glorified
 ‘ saint in heaven is greater than any man upon earth!
 ‘ To mention this is sufficiently to refute it. There
 ‘ can therefore no doubt be made, but *the kingdom of*
 ‘ *heaven* here (as in the following verse, where it is
 ‘ said to be *taken by force*) or *the kingdom of God*, as
 ‘ St. Luke expresses it, is that kingdom of God on
 ‘ earth, whereunto all true believers in Christ, all real
 ‘ christians, belong. In these words then our Lord de-
 ‘ clares two things. (1) That before his coming in
 ‘ the flesh, among all the children of men, there had
 ‘ not been one greater than John the Baptist: whence
 ‘ it evidently follows, that neither Abraham, David,
 ‘ nor any Jew, was greater than John. (2) That he

‘ who is least in the kingdom of God (in that kingdom, which he came to set up on earth, and which the violent now began *to take by force*) is greater than he. Not a greater prophet (as some have interpreted the word) for this is palpably false in fact : But greater in the grace of God, and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we cannot measure the priviledges of real Christians by those formerly given to the Jews. *Their ministration* (or dispensation) we allow *was glorious* ; but ours *exceeds in glory*. So that whosoever would bring down the christian dispensation to the jewish standard, &c. doth greatly err, *neither knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*’ — From these excellent quotations therefore, it appears, that you do me an honour altogether undeserved, if you suppose, that I first set forth the doctrine of the dispensations.

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OBJ. VIII. “ I cannot help thinking, that the doctrine of a faith proper to all those dispensations is above the capacity of *plain christians*, and should never be mentioned, lest it should puzzle, instead of edifying the Church.”

If your fears are well-grounded, even the apostle’s creed is above the capacity of plain christians: for that creed, the simplest of all those, which the primitive church has handed down to us, evidently distinguishes three degrees of faith : (1) *Faith in God the Father almighty, who made heaven and earth*, which is the faith of the heathens : (2) *Faith in the Messiah, or in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son our Lord* ; which is the faith of pious jews, of John’s disciples, and of imperfect christians, who, like the apostles before the day of pentecost, are yet strangers to the † great outpouring

† I beg the reader would not mistake me. When I say that pious Jews, and our Lord’s disciples before the day of pentecost, were strangers to the *great outpouring* of the Spirit, I do not mean that they were

pouring of the spirit : And (3) *Faith in the Holy Ghost* — Faith of the operation of God, by which christians complete in Christ believe according to the working of God's almighty power, and are filled with righteousness, peace, and joy in THUS believing.

And here honesty obliges me to lay before the public an objection, which I have had for some time against the appendages of the Athanasian Creed. I admire the scriptural manner, in which it sets forth the divine Unity in Trinity, and the divine Trinity in Unity : but I can no longer indiscriminately use its damnatory clauses. It abruptly takes us to the very top of the christian dispensation [considered in a doctrinal light.] This dispensation it calls *the catholic Faith* : and, without mentioning the faith of the inferior dis-

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pensations,

were strangers to his directing, sanctifying, and enlivening influences, according to their dispensation. For David had prayed, *Take not thy holy Spirit from me* : John the Baptist had been visited by his exhilarating power, even in his mother's womb : Our Lord had *breathed upon his disciples*, saying, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost* ; and had imparted him to them as a Spirit of grace and supplication, to help them to wait in faith and unceasing prayer, till they were endued with power from on high : Besides, they had called him LORD in truth ; and no man can do this, but by the Spirit of faith, which helps our unbelief and infirmities under all the divine dispensations. Nevertheless they were not fully baptized. The Comforter, that visited them, did not properly dwell in them. Altho' they had already wrought miracles by his power, the Promise of the Father was not yet fulfilled to them. They had not yet been made perfect in one, by the assimilating operation of the heavenly fire. They would have been puzzled by such questions as these : *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed ?* Acts xix. 2. — *Is he fallen upon you ?* Acts x. 44. — *Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost given unto you ?* Rom. v. 5. — *Is the fountain springing up into everlasting life opened in your breast ?* John iv. 14. — *After that ye believed, were ye sealed with that holy Spirit of promise ?* Eph. i. 13. — That Spirit, which forms those rivers of living water, that flow out of the belly, the inmost soul of believers ? — That Spirit which was not given before Christ was glorified ? John vii. 39. — That Comforter, which it is more expedient for us to receive, than even to have Christ's bodily presence and constant instructions ? John xvi. 7. — If these, and the like questions would have perplexed the apostles before Christ had opened his spiritual baptism, and set up his kingdom with power in their hearts ; we ought not to be surprized, that professors, who know only the baptism of John, should ingenuously confess, they never heard

penations, as our other Creeds do, it makes us declare, that '*except "EVERY ONE" keep that faith*' [the faith of the highest dispensation] '*whole and undefiled — he cannot be saved : — without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.*' This dreadful denunciation is true with regard to proud, ungodly infidels, who, in the midst of all the means of *christian* faith, obstinately, maliciously, and finally set their heart against the doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; equally despising the Son's atonement, and the Spirit's inspiration. But I will no more invade Christ's tribunal, and pronounce that the fearful punishment of damnation shall "*without doubt*" be inflicted upon "*every*" unitarian, arian, jew, turk, and heathen, *that fears God and works righteousness*, tho' he does not hold the faith of the Athanasian creed *whole*. For, if you except the last article, thousands, yea millions, are never called to hold it AT ALL; and therefore shall never

heard there was an Holy Ghost [to be received] since they believed, Acts xix. 2. Nor should we wonder if devout Jews, and easy Laodiceans did even mock and say, You would have us to be filled with NEW wine : but we are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. The water of our old cisterns is preferable to the new wine of your enthusiastic doctrine, and our baptismal ponds to your baptismal flames.

This however was not Mr. Whitefield's language when he admitted an *adult* person to baptism : [and he knowingly admitted none but *believers*.] He knew *then* how to pray for the *Promise of the Father*, and how to point the *disciple of John* to the *perfection of Christ's dispensation*. As a proof of it take part of the truly christian hymn which he sung on that occasion :

ANOINT with HOLY FIRE,
 BAPTIZE with PURGING FLAMES
 This soul, and with thy grace inspire
 In CEASELESS, LIVING STREAMS.
 Thy HEAV'NLY UNCTION give,
 THY PROMISE, Lord, fulfil,
 'Give Pow'r' [*i. e. faith*] 'THY SPIRIT TO RECEIVE,'
 And STRENGTH to do thy will.

This good old gospel is far more clearly set forth in Mr. Wesley's sermon called *Scriptural Christianity*, and in his *Hymns for Whitsunday*, which I earnestly recommend, as pointing out the one thing needful for all carnal professors.

ver perish for not *holding it whole*. See the notes p. 43 and 190. At all hazards then, I hope I shall never use again those damnatory clauses, without taking the liberty of guarding them agreeably to the doctrine of the dispensations. And if Zelotes presses me with my subscriptions, I reply before hand, that the same Church, who required me to subscribe to St. Athanasius's Creed, enjoins me also to believe this clause of St. Peter's Creed, *In every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness is accepted of him*: And if those two creeds are irreconcilable, I think it more reasonable, that Athanasius should bow to Peter, warmed by the Spirit of love; than that Peter should bow to Athanasius, heated by controversial opposition.

To return: That the distinction of the three degrees of saving faith omitted in the Athanasian creed, but expressed in the Apostles creed, and in the Nicene creed — That this distinction, I say, is neither chimerical nor enthusiastical, may be proved by a variety of arguments, two or three of which, I hope, will not intrude too long upon the reader's patience.

(1) The first is taken from the doctrine expressly laid down in the new testament. To what I have said on this head, p. 229, &c. I add here what Christ said to his disciples, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*. Here the most prejudiced, may see, that faith in the FATHER is clearly contradistinguished from faith in the SON. As for faith in the HOLY GHOST, see in what manner our blessed Lord sowed the seed of it in the hearts of his disciples. *When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, he shall testify of me. — It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you. — Behold I send THE PROMISE OF MY FATHER upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high*. Nor was this great promise made to the apostles alone; for, *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If ANY MAN [not if an apostle] thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me,*

as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive : for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given ; his dispensation, which is the highest of all, was not yet opened] because that Jesus was not yet glorified. And the opening of this dispensation in our hearts requires on our part, not only faith in Christ, but a peculiar faith in the promise of the Father ; a promise this, which has the Holy Ghost for its great object.

(2) My second argument is taken from the experiences of those, who, by the Holy Ghost, were made partakers of Christ glorified, either on the day of pentecost, or after it ; and could feelingly confess Christ dying for us, and Christ living in us, the hope of glory. Acts ii. 5, we read of devout men out of every nation under heaven, who were come to worship at Jerusalem. But how could they have been devout men, if they had not believed in God ? What could have brought them from the ends of the earth to keep a feast to the Lord, if they had been mere atheists ? And yet it is evident, that thro' prejudice many of them rejected our Lord ; putting him to open shame, and a bloody death : But when Peter preached Christ on the day of pentecost, they at first believed on him with a true, tho' not with a luminous faith. This appears from the anguish, which they felt upon being charged with having slain the prince of life. No man in his senses can be pricked to the heart merely for having had a hand in the just punishment of an impostor, and a blasphemer, who makes himself equal with God. If therefore keen remorse pierced the heart of those penitent Jews, it is evident, that they looked no more upon Christ as an impostor, but already believed in him as the true Messiah.

No sooner had they thus passed from faith in the Father to an explicit faith in the Son, but they cried out, *What shall we do ?* And Peter directed them to make by baptism an open, solemn profession of their faith in Christ, and to believe the great promise concerning the Holy Ghost. *The promise is unto you,* said he : *Be baptized, EVERY ONE OF YOU, in the name of*
of

of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins ; and ye [every one of you] shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. And upon their gladly receiving the word ; i. e. upon their heartily believing the gladdening promise relating to pardon and to the Comforter ; and, no doubt, upon their fervently-praying, that it might be fulfilled in them ; they were all filled with the Spirit : all their hearts overflowed with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

St. Peter speaking (Acts xi) of a similar out-pouring of the Spirit, says, *The Holy Ghost fell on them [Gentiles] as on us [Jews] at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water them that entered his dispensation, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, when you shall enter the full dispensation of my Spirit : — God, adds Peter, gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. — And when the apostles heard these things, they glorified God ; not indeed by shouting, “ Then hath God given the Gentiles power to speak arabick ; ” but by saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life, according to the fulness of the christian dispensation.*

That this dispensation of the Holy Ghost, this coming of Christ's spiritual kingdom with power, is attended with an uncommon degree of sanctifying grace, is acknowledged by all : And that the gift of tongues, &c. which at first on some occasions, and in some persons, accompanied the baptism of the spirit, for a sign to bigoted jews, or to stupid heathens — that such a gift, I say, was a temporary appendage, and by no means an essential part of Christ's spiritual baptism, is evident from the merely-spiritual effect, which the receiving of the Holy Ghost had upon the penitent jews, who, being *born of water and of the Spirit*, pressed after the apostles into the kingdom of God on the day of pentecost.

‘ Even in the infancy of the church,’ [says an eminent divine] ‘ God divided those’ [miraculous] ‘ gifts with a sparing hand. Were all even then prophets ? Were all workers of miracles ? Had all the
‘ gifts

' gifts of healing ? Did all speak with tongues ? No, in
' no wise. Perhaps not one in a thousand. Prob-
' ably none but the teachers of the church, and only
' some of them. It was therefore for a more excel-
' lent purpose than this, that *they* the (brethren and
' apostles) *were all filled with the Holy Ghost*. It was
' to give them (what none can deny to be essential
' to all christians in all ages) *the mind which was in*
' *Christ*, those holy fruits of the spirit, which, who-
' soever has not, is none of his: to fill them with
' *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness.*'

It is very remarkable, that altho' 3000 converts
received the gift of the Holy Ghost on the memorable
day, in which Christ opened the dispensation of his
spirit, no mention is made of so much as *one* of them
working a single miracle, or speaking with *one* new
tongue. But the greatest, and most beneficial of
miracles was wrought upon them all: For, *all that*
believed, says St. Luke, *were together; continuing daily*
with one accord in the temple, breaking bread from house
to house, eating their meat with gladness and singleness
of heart, praising God, and having favour with all
the people, by their humble, affectionate, angelical
behaviour. Or, as the same historian expresses it,
Acts iv. 32, *The multitude of them that believed—spoke*
greek and latin! No, but—were of ONE heart, and
of ONE soul: neither said any of them, that ought of
the things which he possessed was his own; but they had
all things common; having been made perfect in one,
agreeably to our Lord's deep prayer, recorded by St.
John: *Neither pray I for these [my disciples] alone, but*
for THEM also, who shall believe on me thro' their word,
That they may be ONE:—I in them by my spirit, and
thou in me, that they may be made PERFECT IN ONE.

(3) To this argument taken from the experiences of
the primitive christians, I may add, that the doctrine
of the dispensations is indirectly taught by our church
even to children in her catechism, where she instructs
them to say: "*By the articles of my belief I learn,*
FIRST, to believe in God the Father, who made me, &c.
SECONDLY, in God the Son, who redeemed me, &c. And

THIRDLY,

THIRDLY, *in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me:* For these *three* distinctions, are expressive of the three grand degrees of the faith, *whereby we inherit ALL the promises* of God, and *are made partakers of the divine nature*: They are not descriptive of faith in *three* Gods, but of the capital manifestations of the triune God, in whose name we are baptized; and of the three great dispensations of the everlasting gospel, namely that of the *heathens*, that of the *jews*, and that of *spiritual christians*; the dispensation of Abraham being only a link between heathenism and judaism; and the dispensation of John the baptist, or of christianity begun, being only a transition between judaism and christianity perfected.

Our church-catechism brings to my remembrance the office of confirmation, it was, it seems, originally intended to lead young believers to the fulness of the christian dispensation, agreeably to what we read Acts viii. 12, &c. Peter and John went from Jerusalem to Samaria to lay their hands on the believers who had not yet been baptized with the Holy Ghost, and to pray, *that they might receive him*: For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized by Philip in the name of the Lord Jesus. — *When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?* I fear, but little of the faith peculiar to his full dispensation. Most professors seem satisfied with John's baptism or Philip's baptism: The Lord raise us apostolic pastors to pray in the demonstration of the spirit and of power: 'Strengthen thy servants, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter; and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the Spirit of wisdom and understanding; the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength; the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them with the Spirit of thy holy fear now and for ever.' *Order of Confirmation.* Can it be said that those, in whom that prayer is not now answered, live under the dispensation of christianity perfected? Are they either established christians, or spiritual church-men? How long shall the mystery of iniquity prevail! How long shall a pharisaic deistical world

world *destroy* the faith of the SON, under colour of contending for faith in the FATHER ! And how long shall a world of antinomian solifidian professors destroy faith in the *Holy Ghost*, under pretence of recommending faith in the Son ! O Lord, exert thy power : *Pour of thy spirit upon all flesh*, and give wisdom to all thy ministers to divide the word of truth aright, and to feed thy people according to their states and thy dispensations !

If these answers give my objector no satisfaction, and he still thinks it his duty to attack my Essay, I beg leave to address him in the words of a judicious divine of the last century. ' I shall not need (I presume) to desire you, that in your answer you will not rise up in your might against the weaker, looser, or less considerate passages or expressions (of which kind you may very possibly meet with more than enough :) but that you will rather bend the *strength* of your reply, against the *strength* of what you shall oppose. You well know that a field may be won, tho' many foldiers of the conquering side should fall in the battle : and that a tree may flourish and retain both its beauty, and firmness of standing in the earth, tho' many of the smaller twigs and lesser branches should prove dry, and so be easily broken off. So may a mountain remain unmoved, yea immovable, tho' many handfuls of the lighter and looser earth about the sides of it, should be taken up, and scattered into the air like dust. In like manner the body of a discourse may stand entire in its solidity, weight and strength, tho' many particular expressions, sayings, and reasonings therein, that are more remote from the centre, should be detected either of inconsiderateness, weakness, or untruth.'

END OF THE SECOND APPENDIX.

ERRATUM.] Page 152, line 30, after *hundred*, add *years*.



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Nosyb.